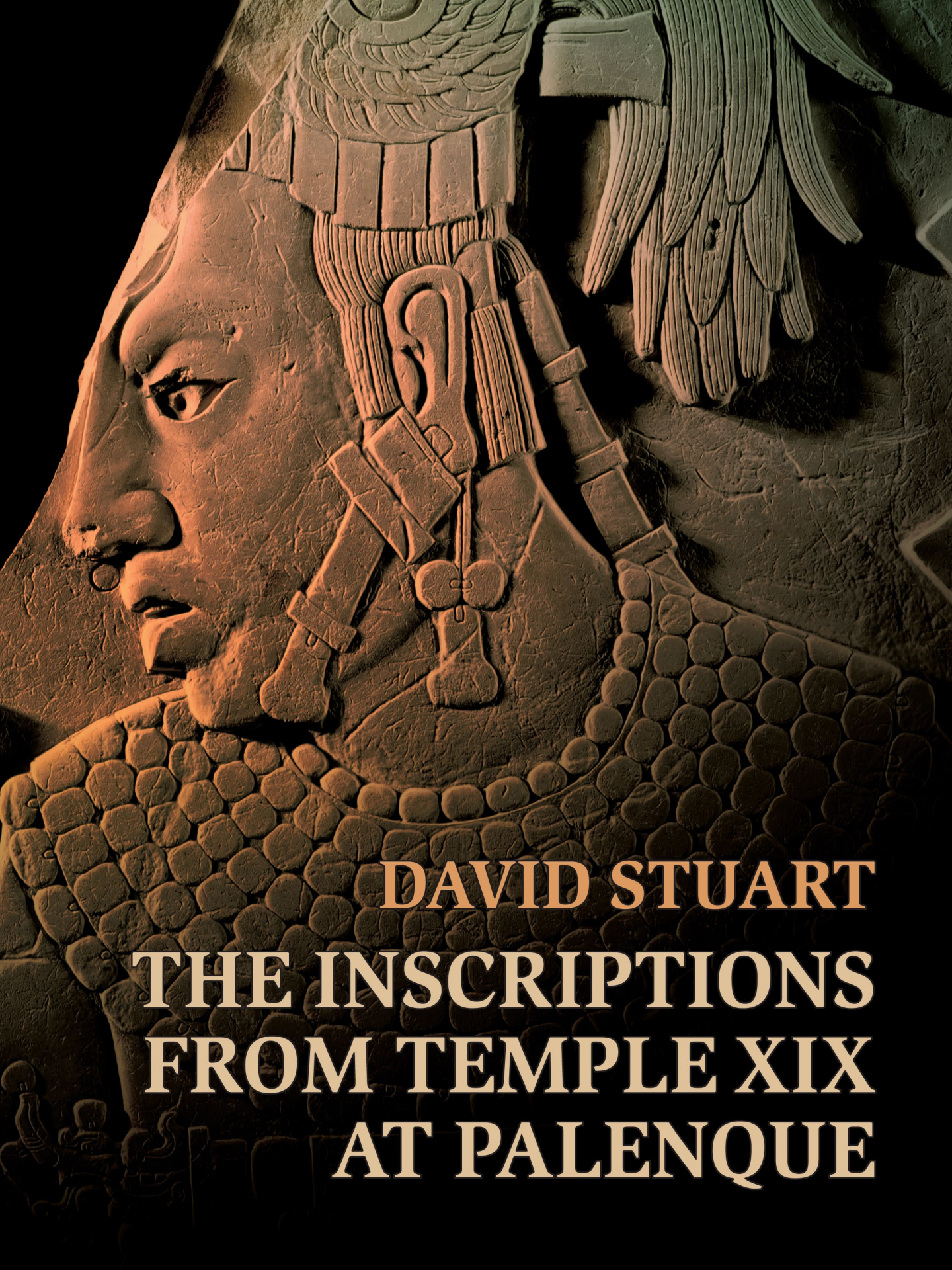


DAVID STUART

THE INSCRIPTIONS FROM TEMPLE XIX AT PALENQUE

The Inscriptions from Temple XIX at Palenque

A Commentary





The Inscriptions from Temple XIX at Palenque

A Commentary

By David Stuart

Photographs by Jorge Pérez de Lara

The Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute
San Francisco

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Alfonso Morales, who oversaw the excavations of Temple XIX, has been a constant source of encouragement as well, and without his generosity and support the present work would simply not have been possible. Over several months I eagerly awaited his "chocolates" in email form—images of the inscriptions and tablets sent soon after they were unearthed. He is a true pioneer of "cyber-archaeology." Among the excellent team working alongside Alfonso I would like to thank in particular Ed Barnhart, Julie Miller, Christopher Powell, and Kirk Straight. Jorge Pérez de Lara kindly made available his stunning photographs of the Temple XIX platform, without which this study could not have been made.

Needless to say, the ideas and musings in this work are my own, but over the past few years I have benefited from the feedback and observations of many epigraphers. I would like to particularly acknowledge (in alphabetical order) Karen Bassie-Sweet, Guillermo Bernal Romero, Stanley Guenter, Stephen Houston, Alfonso Lacadena, Simon Martin, Jorge Pérez de Lara, Werner Nahm, Christopher Powell, John Robertson, Joel Skidmore, Karl Taube, Alexander Tokovinine, Erik Velásquez García, and Marc Zender for the many emails exchanged over the details of the Temple XIX inscriptions. Indeed, it is difficult to adequately acknowledge their fertile contributions to my own thinking and interpretations, and no doubt many of their individual insights will find their way into print in other venues. Christopher Powell, for example, has discerned a number of fascinating astronomical patterns in the dates of Temple XIX (personal communication 1998), which hopefully will find their way to publication soon. Clearly the Temple XIX texts will be discussed for years to come, and with this study I can only aim to help get the ball rolling.

Much of this work was written over two summers at the Center for Maya Research in Barnardsville, North Carolina, among the seemingly limitless books of my father's library on things Mesoamerican. I can think of no better place to enjoy the serenity of life than in the cradle of those mountains, and I thank my dad, George Stuart, and his wife Melinda for the time I passed there, and the good company and hospitality they provided.

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Most of all, I offer thanks and love to my wife Bridget, who encouraged me to complete this work before even more time passed after the discovery of the Temple XIX materials.* My sons Peter and Richard lured me away from my writing and drawing on countless occasions, much to my betterment. I would not have had it any other way.

* Editor's note: The text of this book is essentially that of a manuscript submitted in February, 2004. The delay in publication was attendant upon Dr. Stuart's move to the University of Texas at Austin and the completion of the drawings and captions. The few changes to the text arose from the editorial process, and only existing citations were updated.

A Note on Orthography and Hieroglyphic Transcription



Many readers are no doubt aware that publications in Maya epigraphy are highly inconsistent when it comes to transcribing hieroglyphic signs. Specialists are equally conscious of the situation, and all who actively pursue or follow Maya glyph studies struggle with the seemingly constant changes and refinements found in the literature. Any single orthography and its idiosyncratic features can never be perfect, since it is forged from an array of difficult (and sometimes unanswerable) questions involving linguistics and epigraphy. For these reasons I am well aware that the system adopted here, different from others used in recent years, will frustrate some readers, confuse others, and perhaps satisfy few. Even so, I believe that the system used in these pages, based as it is on earlier and well established conventions, will be a manageable one for students and colleagues to follow, even if not widely adopted for future use.

Generally speaking, the changes in orthography chosen by epigraphers reflect the rapid changes and refinements in hieroglyphic research. Nearly two decades ago, Fox and Justeson (1984) outlined the basis for the glyphic transcription system that came to be adopted by most specialists in subsequent writing. George Stuart (1988) modified these slightly when establishing conventions to be used in the *Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing*, and this system came to be widely adopted. Justeson (personal communication 1997) has rightly noted that the ancient script differentiated between the fricatives *h* and *j*, as reconstructed for proto-Ch'olan (Kaufman and Norman 1984). Many epigraphers, including the author (see D. Stuart 1987b), had failed to take this into account, influenced perhaps by the long-lasting focus on Yucatecan languages in epigraphic research (in their early history Yucatecan languages lost this distinction, with both proto-Mayan **j* and **h* merging as *h*). Internal evidence for the *j* and *h* distinction in the hieroglyphic script has been strengthened considerably in recent years, and the two consonants were no doubt separate in the phonology of "Classic Mayan," or Classic Ch'olti'an, as the language of the inscriptions has recently been dubbed (Houston, Robertson, and Stuart 2000).

In following the orthography adopted by the *Research Reports*, I have chosen one slight modification from earlier conventions by using *tz* and *tz'* in place of *ts* and *ts'*. Also, there is now good evidence that the language of the inscriptions distinguished between long and

short vowels (Houston, Robertson, and Stuart 1998). In the transcription of signs and the transliteration of texts, I have chosen to mark long vowels by doubling the letter: *aa*, for example, in contrast to short *a*. Vowel length can be marked in one of several ways, and in some previous works I and others have employed a vowel letter followed by a colon (*a:*, *u:*, etc.). My preference for doubled vowel letters stems from a desire for visual simplicity, and it is strengthened by its recent use by Martin and Grube (2000) in their remarkable book on Classic Maya dynastic history.

Discussions continue about whether glottal stops attached to vowels in word-initial position should be represented in glyphic orthography (e.g., **'AJAW**), and how this is best done if so. Traditionally this has not been marked in the older epigraphic literature, but it is standard practice in various linguistic orthographies and now often used in glyphic transcriptions. I have opted to omit the representation of pre-vocalic glottals, since these are not marked in the ancient script (as post-vocalic glottals are, as in **tz'i-i**, for *tz'i'*, "dog"). This has the added advantage of simplifying the transliterations and transcriptions somewhat, but I realize that others may well prefer to indicate it. In the same vein, I have opted to omit the apostrophe in the implosive *b'*, which, while phonetically more precise, does not contrast with an unglottalized *b* in Mayan languages.

The orthographic conventions underlying Maya epigraphy certainly have been in flux for several years, but with improvements in the understanding of the script and its own linguistic conventions, I am confident that the dust will settle. Good communication among scholars will be key in seeing this come about. Also, the recent inauguration of the Maya glyph dictionary project, generously funded by FAMSI, will provide an excellent chance for epigraphers and linguists to collaborate on a consistent and hopefully satisfactory system.



Detail of the stone panel from the Temple XIX pier.



Introduction

Before 1998 little attention was paid to Temple XIX, then one of a great many mounds enveloped in the dark rain forest surrounding Palenque's main center. The location of the building within the larger architectural complex of the Cross Group, and its apparent orientation facing directly toward the Temple of the Cross (Figure 1), indicated its importance to the few visitors who paid Temple XIX any attention, but the absence of standing walls and decoration had long prevented its meaningful study. This anonymity quickly changed with the excavations undertaken at Temple XIX under the auspices of the Proyecto Grupo de las Cruces, the joint effort of the Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute and Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). The results of the excavations show that Temple XIX is one of the major ritual structures at Palenque and among the city's richest sources of hieroglyphic inscriptions. The present study offers an initial assessment of these extraordinary texts, which open many doors onto Palenque's history and mythology, as well as the religion of the ancient Maya in general.

Four very different inscribed monuments were uncovered in the Temple XIX excavations, and their placement within the greater architectural scheme of the building is shown in Figure 2.

- On the building's exterior, fragments of a single *alfarda* (or balustrade) tablet from the upper stairway (Figure 3) bear a dedicatory inscription, much like the similar monuments known from the substructures of the nearby Cross Group temples. Presumably two *alfarda* tablets originally existed on the temple, as seen in other examples.
- A tall masonry pier just inside the central doorway originally bore a stone panel on its front side, portraying the Palenque ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb flanked by two kneeling nobles (Figure 4). This extraordinarily beautiful relief, broken and removed in antiquity, had a text panel above the figures, but again only a small portion has been found thus far.
- Decorating the left face of the same interior pier was a taller polychrome stucco relief, also accompanied by a hieroglyphic text (Figure 5).
- Finally, the most extraordinary new text from Temple XIX comes from a small altar-like platform constructed at the northeast corner of the temple's interior (see foldouts at

end of volume). This construction, rectangular in plan, bore sculpted panels on its west and south faces, each with a figural scene and a lengthy hieroglyphic text in an incised calligraphic style similar to that on the celebrated Tablet of the 96 Glyphs. The record of mythical and dynastic events recorded in these texts warrants their addition to the select group of highly important religious and historical documents from Palenque.

Soon after the excavations in Temple XIX came to an end (and as initial drafts of the present work were being circulated), Arnoldo González Cruz of the Palenque INAH project

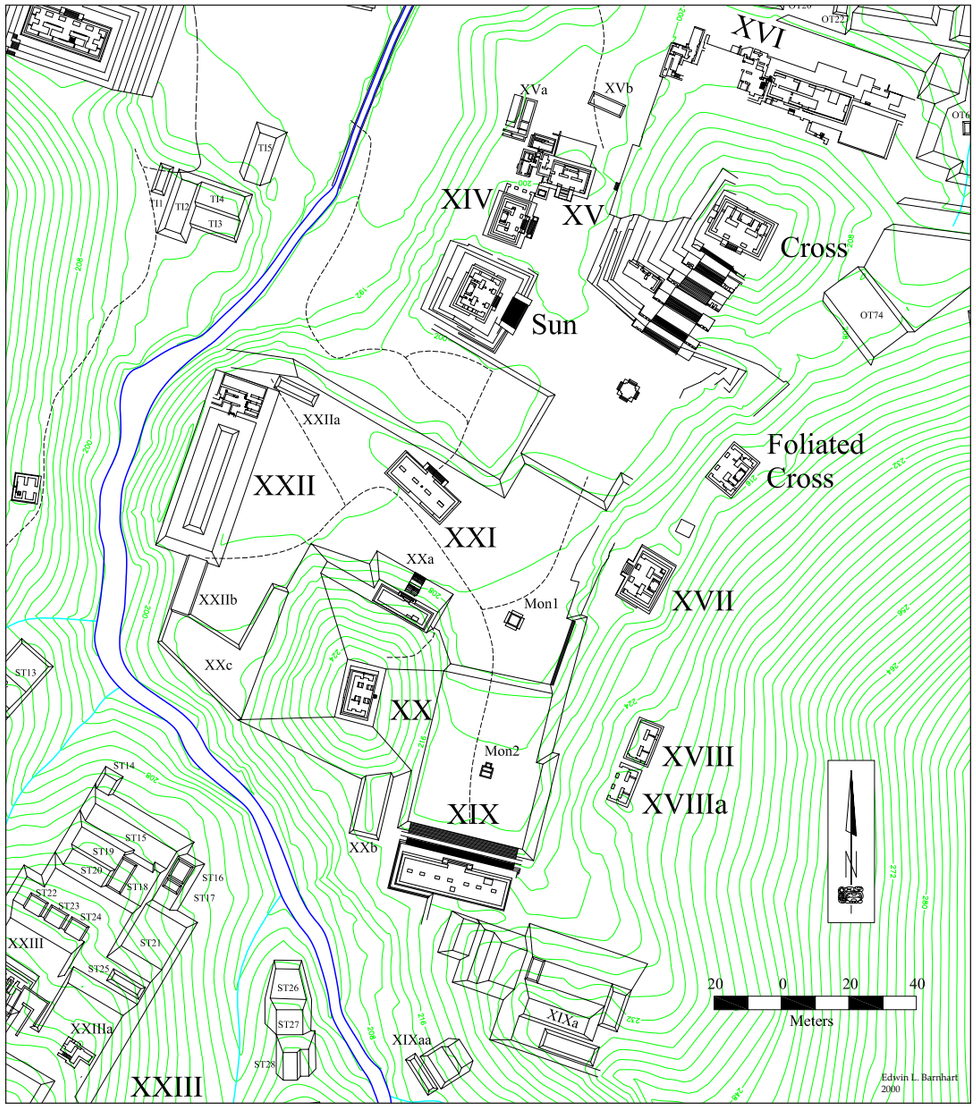
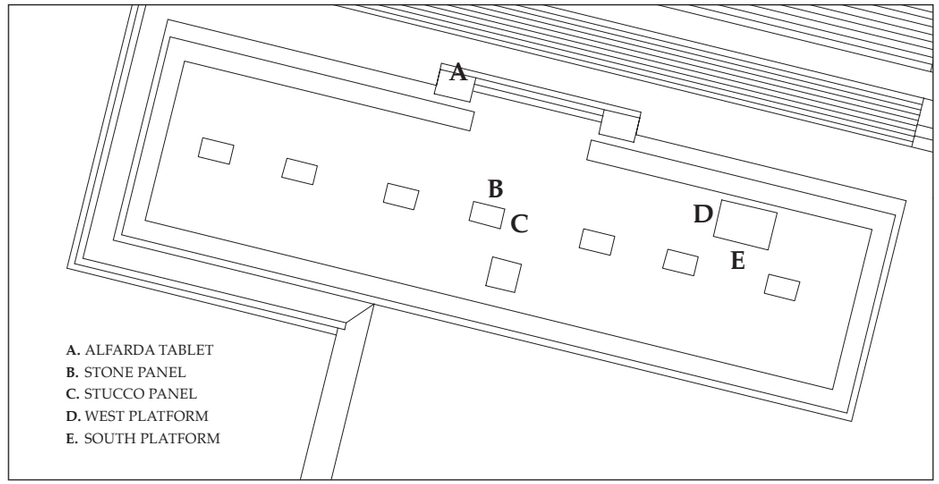


Figure 1. Map of the larger Group of the Cross, showing the orientation of Temple XIX toward the Temple of the Cross (detail of map surveyed by Ed Barnhart of the Palenque Mapping Project).



a



b c

Figure 2. Temple XIX: (a) plan of the superstructure, indicating the original placement of the four inscribed monuments, (b) the structure in the early stages of exploration, (c) the structure in the final stages of restoration (photographs by Joel Skidmore).



Figure 3. The partial *alfarda* tablet of Temple XIX (photograph by Jorge Pérez de Lara).



Figure 4. The stone panel from the Temple XIX pier. (Not to scale with Figure 5.)



Figure 5. The stucco panel from the Temple XIX pier. (Not to scale with Figure 4.)

excavated the nearby Temple XXI, with remarkable results. In the summer of 2002 several new inscriptions were found, including a platform with decorations strikingly similar to the monument from Temple XIX's interior. Indeed, as Guillermo Bernal has shown in his excellent preliminary analysis (Bernal 2002), the Temple XXI inscriptions show important parallels to the Temple XIX corpus of texts, both in terms of subject matter and style. As a result, many of the observations and discussions in the present work will necessarily touch on Temple XXI.

The inscriptions of Temple XIX and XXI all date to about the same time, having been dedicated twelve to fifteen years into the reign of the fourteenth Palenque king, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb (known as "Chaacal III" or "Akul Anab III" in numerous earlier studies). This important ruler assumed the throne on 9.14.10.4.2 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab (Berlin 1968; Mathews and Schele 1974), and he appears to have reigned for almost two decades. The history surrounding him and the years of his rule is still poorly understood, but the Temple XIX and XXI monuments shed considerable light on this somewhat enigmatic king in Palenque's history. The final years of his reign come at the beginning of a long fifty-year gap in Palenque's Late Classic historical record. After Temple XIX's and XXI's inscriptions, the next well-dated monument is the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, dedicated twenty years into the reign of K'inich K'uk' Bahlam, the son of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb.

In this study I will consider each of the four Temple XIX monuments separately, in the order presented above (this corresponds, as it happens, to the order of their discovery). A greater amount of space naturally will be devoted to the lengthy platform inscriptions, but it is important to understand from the outset that all three inscribed settings—the *alfarda*, the pier with its stone and stucco panels, and the platform—are thematically linked and exhibit some redundant or overlapping information. Interpreting one text entails an occasional reference to one or both of the others.

Writing a lengthy treatise on Maya glyphs is not easy, and reading it may be even more of an onerous task. There is little way of avoiding the dry tone that comes with technical descriptions and arguments for this or that reading, and some may wonder why such a detailed glyph-by-glyph account is necessary in these days that see so many advances in Maya epigraphy. I chose this structure in order to wring a little of the perceived mystery out of the methods of epigraphic analysis. Non-specialists sometimes see a hodgepodge of ever-changing ideas and decipherments reflected in the work we do, and I have chosen to counter this view through a detailed example of text analysis. This is not to say that what follows in the chapters below will always prove to be correct in the end, but hopefully it will demonstrate the flow of thinking that goes into epigraphic analysis in the current intellectual moment. Another motivation behind the precise treatment of the glyphs is to help do away with a small portion of the "grey literature" of unpublished readings and ideas that circulate among epigraphers, mainly by impermanent emails. A number of such small ideas and observations will wend their way into the discussions below, and with luck some may lay the foundations for other more developed ideas and decipherments.

I should also note that Chapter 2 has been slightly modified from a previously published article devoted to the stucco text of Temple XIX (D. Stuart 2000b). A very general overview of the platform inscription was also published (D. Stuart 2000c), although with little in the way of specific epigraphic commentary. Most of the major ideas reflected in these earlier works remain unchanged, but in the years since I have produced a few refinements to various points of the glyphic analysis.

Detail of the Temple XIX *alfarda* tablet.

Chapter 1.

The *Alfarda* Tablet



Among the distinctive features of Palenque's architecture is the frequent presence of carved and sometimes inscribed tablets on the *alfardas* flanking the uppermost series of steps leading to the doors of a temple. Elaborate examples are found on each of the three main temples of the Cross Group, for example, where their inscriptions provide a quick encapsulation of each temple's significance and dedication date. The partially preserved *alfarda* tablet of Temple XIX is, we will see, very similar, and its inscription foreshadows several of the events recorded in other, longer texts within.

Only one of the *alfarda* tablets from the outer steps leading into the central doorway of Temple XIX was found, and it remains incomplete (Figure 6). The three fragments that make up the extant inscription were found to the right of the door and are likely part of the second of two *alfarda* tablets originally flanking the steps. The glyphs have suffered varying degrees of erosion, unlike the inscriptions of the temple's interior, suggesting a long-term exposure to rain and the elements.

The glyphs begin in mid-sentence, as it were, with a personal name glyph and a title, at pA1 and pB1, respectively. The name is unlike any other from the known standard Palenque

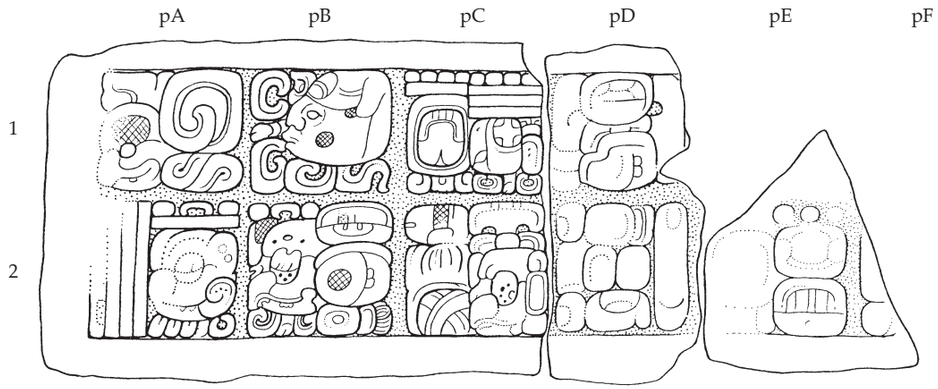


Figure 6. The partial *alfarda* tablet of Temple XIX.
(This and all drawings by David Stuart unless otherwise indicated.)

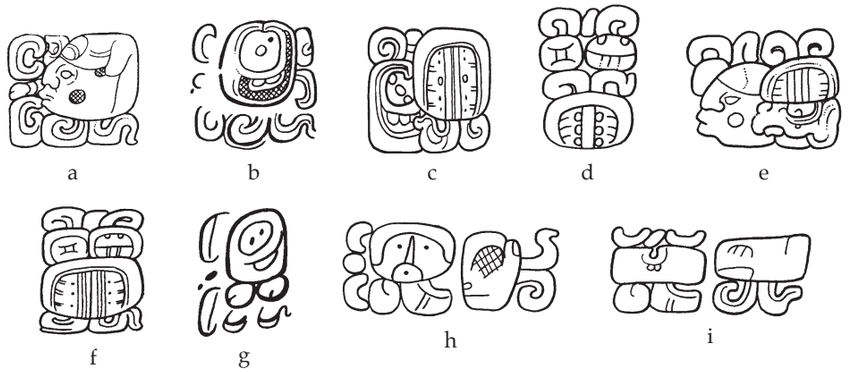


Figure 7. Examples of the glyphic title *Yajaw K'ahk'*, "Lord of Fire": (a) Palenque, T. XIX *alfarda*, (b) Palenque, T. XIX platform, caption of Portrait E, (c) Palenque, T. XIX stone panel, caption of right figure, (d) Tonina, M.140, pOb, (e) Tonina, unnumbered stela base, (f) Palenque, Tablet of the Slaves, E1b, (g) Comalcalco, Stingray Spine 2 (drawing by Marc Zender), (h) Chichen Itza, Four Lintels, Lintel 1, H2-G3, (i) Chichen Itza, Four Lintels, Lintel 4, H5-G6.

corpus and certainly is not that of any familiar ruler. The four signs which make up the name are **yo-OK-?-TAL**, where the prominent looping main sign, in third position, remains undeciphered. The title accompanying this name is more readily understood, written **ya-AJAW-K'AHK'**, for *Yajaw K'ahk'*, "Lord of Fire." This refers to an important office or status within courts at Palenque and elsewhere, and it is cited in the inscriptions of many sites (Figure 7). As we will see in Chapter 3, *yajaw k'ahk'* may specifically serve as a military title or, alternatively, it may designate some category of priest or religious functionary. The well known Palenque noble named Chak Suutz', who is celebrated in the text of the Tablet of the Slaves, was a subsidiary in the court of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb who also carried the *yajaw k'ahk'* title. It appears that more than one such Palenque official could exist at a given time. The name written on the *alfarda* tablet (**yo-OK-?-TAL**) appears prominently in two other inscriptions of this temple, but his role within the Palenque dynasty and court, apart from being connected to Temple XIX, remains a puzzle.

After the name and title—the end of an incomplete passage—the *alfarda* text continues with a Distance Number of 2.7.16 leading to the Calendar Round 9 Kib 19 K'ayab, written at pC1. This falls on any number of Long Count dates, of course, but the particular Distance Number strongly suggests the following reckoning from a Period Ending that would have been written on the initial and missing *alfarda* tablet:

(9.15.0.0. 0	4 Ajaw 13 Yax)	missing
2.7.16		
9.15.2.7.16	9 Kib 19 Kayab	

Confirmation of these placements comes from the fact that these same dates—and another on the *alfarda* tablet still to be discussed—are also cited on the stone tablet of Temple XIX and on the inscribed platform within the temple (see Passages W-2 and W-3), as well as on a now-missing portion of the platform text of Temple XXI.

The event or action associated with 9 Kib 19 K'ayab is a familiar glyph in the Palenque corpus of texts. It is a dedication verb associated with buildings, probably read **OCH-OTOT**, for *och otot*, "enters house," and seems closely related to other expressions that concern the

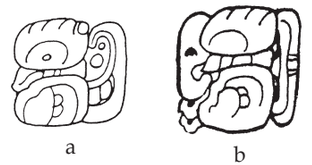


Figure 8. Examples of the Palenque dedication verb *och-otot(-naah)*: (a) TFC *alfarda*, G1, (b) Dumbarton Oaks Tablet, A5 (drawings by Linda Schele).

activation of temples or shrines (Schele 1990; D. Stuart 1998a). At Palenque *och otot* appears frequently in architectural dedication statements (Figure 8), including those associated with the three main pyramids of the Cross Group, the Temples of the Cross, the Sun, and the Foliated Cross. As I have suggested previously (D. Stuart 1998a), this glyphic expression can probably be related to the house dedication and purification ceremony described by Landa called *ok-naah*, "house entering" (see Tozzer 1941:161). Where the same date occurs on the platform inscription of Temple XIX we find a somewhat different verbal expression, *och k'ahk'*, "fire entering," also widely used in dedicatory texts for buildings (D. Stuart 1998a). The verbs make it clear that this prominent date was the dedication of Temple XIX itself.

By examining similar passages from the Cross Group, we can see that the next two glyphs of the *alfarda* tablet, at pC2 and pD2 respectively, probably provide a proper name for a "house" and a term for some specialized architectural type. For example, the Temple of the Foliated Cross has an *alfarda* tablet with a text offering some important parallels to the Temple XIX inscription (Figure 9). Again we find the **OCH-OTOT** verb (written in a slightly alternative form) followed directly by the proper name of the temple or sanctuary (in this case **?-?-K'AN-NAAH**) and then the possessed noun *u-pibnaah-il*, "it is his oven house" (Houston 1996). The next two blocks read *u-k'uh-ul K'inich Kan Bahlam*, "the god of K'inich Kan Bahlam," an indirect reference to the Palenque Triad deity GII, the "owner" of this sanctuary of the Foliated Cross. Very much the same thing appears in the Temple XIX *alfarda* tablet (Figure 9a), where the term **CHAK-?-NAAH-hi**, for *chak ..?.. naah*, "(it is) the Red ... House," specifies the place of the dedication. The central sign of this house name is frustratingly elusive, but it seems to represent a fish fin or perhaps some type of tri-lobed flower (clearer examples will appear in the platform inscription). The possessed noun at pD2 is much eroded, but looks to be **U-?-pi?-ji-li**. I have no decipherment to offer for this expression, and no other examples are known to me, but there can be little doubt that, like the Cross Group's "oven house," the phrase *u-..?..-pij?-il* refers to a certain type of architectural space, perhaps even some small area within Temple XIX.

Here the *alfarda* inscription abruptly ends before a gap of two glyphs, picking up again at



Figure 9. Parallel dedication passages: (a) from the *alfarda* inscription of Temple XIX, (b) from the *alfarda* of the Temple of the Foliated Cross (drawing by Linda Schele).

pE2 with a date that includes the month "3 Wayeb." If we continue seeking the parallel with other *alfarda* texts of the Cross Group, however, it might be possible to reconstruct the missing portion at pE1 and pF1. As we have seen, in those texts a god's name always follows the possessed noun *u-pibnaah-il*, expressing the "owner" of the "oven-house" within the temple. Given this pattern, and especially the information given in the platform inscription to be discussed below, there can be little doubt, I think, that block pE1 was once the name glyph of the god GI of the Palenque Triad. As we will see, he is the supernatural protagonist of the Temple XIX inscriptions, singled out as the chief member of the Palenque Triad of gods.

Block pF1 may have extended the name phrase of the god GI, or else it was a Distance Number reckoning forward to the heavily eroded date visible at pE2, with the 3 Wayeb month record. The day sign is eroded, but again, to anticipate, there is strong reason to believe that this was once 9.15.2.9.0 7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb, falling 24 days after the 9 Kib date of the house dedication. This Calendar Round is written in the platform inscription directly after the same 9 Kib 19 K'ayab date found on the *alfarda* tablet, and it seems very likely that pF1 was once the required Distance Number 1.4. Unfortunately the event associated with this date is missing (originally at pF2 on the *alfarda* tablet), but we will find a complete record of it on the platform inscription, in Passage W-4.

Summarizing the *alfarda* tablet inscription thus far, we have the following three dates and events: (1) The Period Ending 9.15.0.0.0, implied and probably on the missing initial *alfarda* tablet. The ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb may have been named as the celebrant of the Period Ending, but all that survives is a reference to a certain subordinate figure named **yo-OK-?-TAL**, who we will find mentioned in the other inscriptions of Temple XIX (see Figure 21). This lesser figure bears the title *Yajaw K'ahk'*, "Fire Lord," which may concern warfare or priestly duties of some sort. (2) A building dedication on 9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 K'ayab, probably for Temple XIX itself. The structure is called a *Chak-..?..-Naah*, or "Red ..?.. House," named in other texts from the temple as a type of building associated with GI of the Palenque Triad. (3) Finally, a destroyed reference to a ritual on 9.15.2.9.0 7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb, which is repeated in the inscription of the temple's platform and, as we will soon see, probably also on the stone tablet of the interior pier.

The fragmented *alfarda* tablet from outside Temple XIX is quite like other similar tablets from the Cross Group, presenting a synopsis of the principal dedicatory and ritual events recorded in longer texts within the temple. As we move inside and consider the other texts of the temple, we will find that the balustrade provides important contextual information for understanding and interpreting these significant episodes in Palenque's ritual history.

Chapter 2.

The Sculpted Pier



I. The Stone Panel

Inside the single doorway of Temple XIX stood a tall supporting pier, originally adorned with what must surely rank as one of the great masterpieces of Maya relief sculpture (Figure 4). The thin slab of extremely fine-grained limestone is broken, with slightly more than half of its surface recovered from the temple's excavations.



Figure 10. The Palenque Emblem Glyph bird, from the Palace Tablet, N10.

The standing figure in the center of the panel is the ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, named in an accompanying caption and in his glyphic headdress. Two attendant figures kneel at either side, also named with their own captions. The king's portrait, with its fantastically designed costume, is one of the most remarkable images of Maya art. He stands within the gaping mouth of a bird's head shown *en face*, probably constructed as an elaborate "back-rack" like the complex costume elements sometimes seen on painted ceramics, often in association with dance (a very similar costume adorns the striding figure on the stucco frieze of the same pier). The bird's large upper beak rears above the king, with the lower beak extended forward and around his midsection. The massive costume is partly supported from below by the kneeling men, one of whom tenderly holds the lower beak with one extended hand.

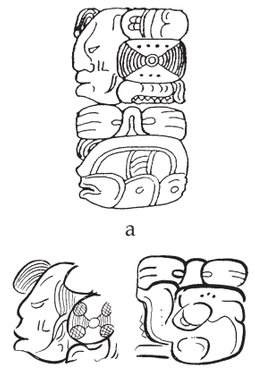


Figure 11. Replacement of the signs **ma-ta** by the Emblem Glyph bird **MAT** (with **ma-** phonetic complement) in the name of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb's mother, Ix Kinuw Mat: (a) Tablet of the Slaves, figure caption (drawing by Merle Greene Robertson), (b) T. XXI platform.

The large "eyelashes" and the distinctive toothed or serrated beak strongly resemble features of the crested bird sign **MAT**, commonly found as an Emblem Glyph main sign in Palenque's inscriptions (Figure 10). The same bird is also an important part of several personal names in Palenque's history, including those of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb's mother and father, as recorded on the Tablet of the Slaves. The **MAT** value was established from various contexts where the syllables **ma-ta** replace the bird head logogram (D. Stuart 1979; Bowen and Anderson 1994) (Figure 11; see also Figure 17). Interestingly, in modern Chontal *mat* is

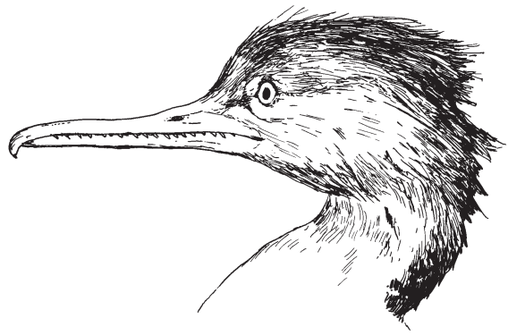


Figure 12. The double-crested cormorant.

a term for "*varios tipos de patos*" (Keller and Luciano G. 1997:156), which is no doubt related to the more specifically defined Yucatec term *mach*, "cormorant" (Hartig 1979). The crest may suggest the double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus floridanus*) or the neotropic cormorant (*Phalacrocorax olivaceus mexicanus*) (Figure 12). Alternatively, the bird may be a hooded merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*), which bears a strong resemblance to the sign as well, and is distinctive among water birds for having a serrated or "toothed" bill, unlike the cormorant (see O'Mack 1991). At present I am somewhat hesitant to choose one specific species identification over the other, though I do see the merganser as having a more direct visual connection to the **MAT** glyph. The possible connections drawn by O'Mack between mergansers and the iconography of Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl in Central Mexico perhaps draw me further to this identification, but a firmer resolution will hopefully rise out of discussion and consideration by others on the matter.

As noted, the **MAT** sign often appears as an Emblem Glyph at Palenque, where it likely helps to spell the important place name *Matawil* or *Matwil*, cited many times as the locale of key events in Palenque's mythological history, including the birth of the Triad Gods (Stuart and Houston 1994). The equivalence between the **MAT** Emblem Glyph and the *Matwil* toponym is perhaps best seen in the compared name phrases of the so-called "mother goddess" of Palenque's mythology, who will be discussed at length in Chapter 5. These key associations of the *mat* bird make it a highly charged iconographic symbol, and I believe they will prove important in understanding the meaning behind the unusual costume.[1]

One noteworthy detail of the king's costume is his headgear, which presents an emblematic version of his personal name (Figure 13). A macaw head showing detailed featherwork around its eye dominates the symbolic arrangement, and emerging from the beak's nostril is a squared "Zip monster" snout that is one of the more subtle but diagnostic features of

[1] The **MAT** bird has been variously identified over the years as a harpy eagle (Schele, personal communication 1977), a heron, or a crow (Ringle 1996), although the Yucatec word *mach*, "cormorant" (Hartig 1979), is a far stronger connection. The mythical toponym is spelled in a variety of ways: **MAT-la, ma-ta-wi-la**, **ma-ta-wi**, or **ma-MAT-wi-la** (the last from the platform text of Temple XIX). I cannot at present explain the *-wil* ending.

The Matwil Emblem Glyph appears with the earliest royal ancestor of Palenque's mythological history, here named the Triad Progenitor. As we will see, Matwil is specified in this and other Palenque inscriptions as the birthplace of the individual members of the Palenque Triad. The more standard **BAAK-la** emblem for Palenque occurs first with the personage known as Uk'ix Chan, named on the Tablet of the Cross (E10-Q3), who was said to have taken office on 5.7.17.11.17 11 Kaban Seating of Uo (amended from the erroneous "Seating of Pop" as written at P3).

the sun god, *K'inich Ajaw*. This angular motif is clearly related to the later Xuihcoatl entity of Postclassic central Mexico, and likely represents solar heat as the sun god's breath. Indicators of the "turtle" (*ahk*) and the water lily (*nahb*) seem absent from this headdress name, but they may have been somehow indicated on a fragment now missing, below the upper beak of the macaw. The wearing of name glyphs in the headdress is very common in Maya and Mesoamerican art (Kelley 1990), although it must be said that we still lack a detailed study of conventions underlying this interesting bridging of art and writing.

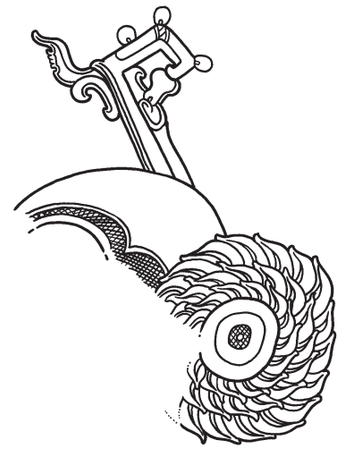


Figure 13. The glyphic headdress of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb from the Temple XIX stone panel.

The Glyphs

Only a few glyphs remain of the panel's main text, which once spanned the upper edge of the panel, above the king's portrait. The fitted fragments of the tablet allow us to visualize a likely format of the whole inscription, assuming it was originally symmetrical in shape (Figure 14). Seventy-two glyph blocks are provided for in this scheme, revealing that the inscription was originally quite sizable. Even though much is missing, we will see that the surviving text offers important clues for reconstructing segments of the text that are completely gone.

The inscription began on a small fragment from the upper left corner of the tablet (Figure 15a), where we

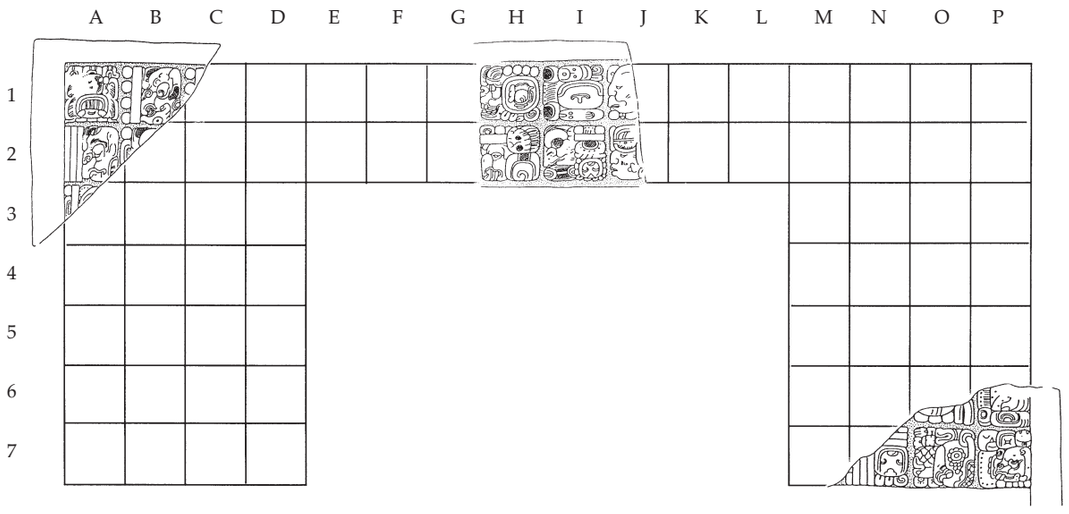
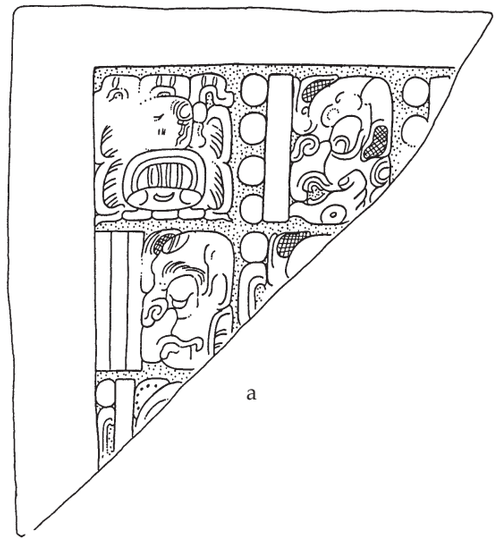
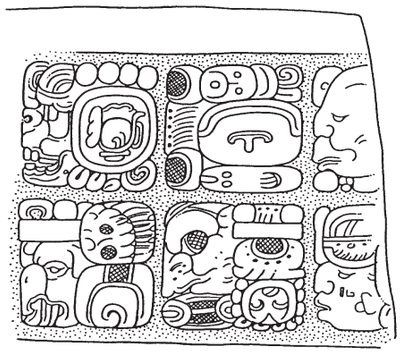


Figure 14. Suggested arrangement of the inscription at the top of the Temple XIX stone panel.





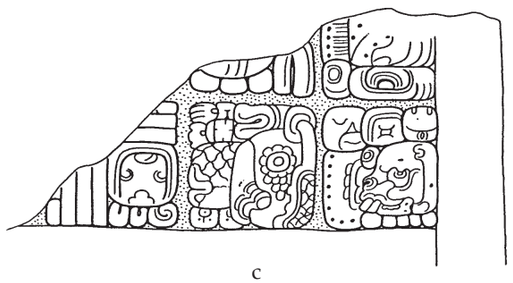


Figure 15. Enlargements of the three extant portions of the Temple XIX stone panel inscription: (a) I.S. fragment from the upper left, (b) middle portion, (c) end portion.

find a partial Initial Series 9.15.2.7.?. The month patron within the Introducing Glyph is a profile maize god indicating that the date fell in the month K'ayab. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the full Long Count was originally 9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 K'ayab, the dedicatory date we have already found recorded on the temple's *alfarda*, and which again appears in the extensive text on the interior platform (to be discussed in Chapter 3, under Passage W-3), as well as on the platform's "twin" in Temple XXI. In addition to the incomplete Initial Series, the corner fragment preserves a small portion of block C1 at the upper right, showing a numerical coefficient 9, 14, or 19; the number could be all that remains of the month position 19 K'ayab. Although the initial passage following the date is missing altogether, the verb phrase must have recorded a building dedication, either in the form found on the balustrade (*och otot*) or by means of some related event phrase, such as *och k'ahk'*, "fire-entering."

Most of the inscription on the tablet is missing, and the next surviving glyph comes in the central horizontal band, directly above the ruler's portrait (Figure 15b). The first legible statement, corresponding to block H1 in the original arrangement, is part of a Distance Number of four Winals and ten days. The elaborate form of the Winal sign is unique to my knowledge, showing the eye and "cruller" of the Jaguar God of the Underworld. The eye of this god is known from Glyph C of the Lunar Series and other settings to be a graphic abbreviation of the larger head of the deity—a *pars pro toto*—and it is therefore probably related to unusual Winal glyphs exhibiting jaguar features found on



Figure 16. A Winal period glyph with jaguar features, from Quirigua, Stela D (from Thompson 1950:Fig.29).

Copan Stela N and Quirigua Stela D (Figure 16). These are not images of the Jaguar God of the Underworld but look instead to be skeletal or partially de-fleshed jaguars. Rare Winal variants, they may be related to other "odd" forms of the Winal period glyph found in the inscriptions of Tonina and Sacchana.

The next block of the tablet at position G2 is missing, but it is likely to have been a pairing of the Haab component of the Distance Number with the day sign preceding the preserved "6 Muwan" at H2a. The event is the standard "wing-shell" expression signifying death, read **K'A'-yi U-?-SAK-IK'-li**, *k'a'-Vy u-? sak ik'-il*, "his '? white spirit' finishes."[2] The subject's name comes in the next glyph, but only half of it survives, showing a prefix of a strange, long-lipped human profile. This is a very distinctive and recognizable sign, and allows us to confidently identify the whole name as the father of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb (Ringle 1996). I tentatively read his name as *Tiwol Chan Mat*.[3] He is depicted as the left-hand figure on the Tablet of the Slaves (Wald 1997) (Figure 17a), and his name glyph appears numerous times in the stucco text of Temple XVIII (Figure 17b), his probable funerary structure (Schele

[2] My analysis of the "wing-shell" verb phrase stands in contrast to other recent assessments, such as that offered by Mora-Marín (2000). The lengthy expression is certainly difficult in many ways, but a few points concerning its reading deserve explanation. First, I continue to doubt the validity of the **NIK** value (Grube 1992) for the simple "ajaw" sign T533 that is often inserted within **SAK**. The common **-ki** suffix is clearly important for establishing its value, but other possibilities should be considered since *nik* or its cognate *nich*, "flower," is already attested widely in the script as T646, representing a floral blossom. This latter sign might well read **NICH**, as indicated indirectly by the spelling **ni-chi** at Tortuguero for the Tzeltalan kin term *nichim*, "son of a man," a noun derived from Greater Tzeltalan *nich*, "flower."

My use of the traditional **IK'**, "wind, breath," reading differs from others who prefer to read it as **NAL** (see Schele 1992:21; Mora-Marín 2000). Again, my preference is based on the simple reasoning that **NAL** is a well established reading for T89, the sprouting maize plant, and I see no overlap between these signs. The **NAL** value for the "wind" sign was based on two examples on the Hieroglyphic Stairway at Copan, where it was reduced to a form identical to the syllable **na**, before **li**. The **-li** or **-IL** suffix appears on virtually all death expressions, including the one here from the Temple XIX panel, as a -V*l* ending on the full possessed noun and therefore cannot be analyzed as part of a syllabic substitution for the **IK'**. The supposed **na** is in fact a replacement for **IK'**, but it is surely a simple graphic abbreviation of the "wind" logograph. This is strongly suggested by the presence of the "**na**" above the **IK'** sign in many examples, including in the contexts of the second day sign which was surely read **IK'** in Classic times.

[3] Ringle refers to the king's father as "Lord T231." The phonetic reading of the name is based mainly on its form on the Tablet of the Slaves, where the syllables **ti-wo** clearly replace the long-lipped face (**TIWOL?**) of other examples, as Wald (1997) and others have noted. On the Temple XIX panel, the **-la** suffix beneath the head may signal the full reading of the logogram, but the semantics of this reconstructed term *tiwohl* are obscure. It would seem not to be a cognate of *chiwoj*, the widespread lowland word for "tarantula."



Figure 17. Portrait and name glyphs of Tiwol Chan Mat: (a) Tablet of the Slaves, left figure (drawing by Merle Greene Robertson), (b) T. XVIII stucco glyph, (b) Tablet of the Slaves, caption, (c) T. XVIII jamb (drawing by Lucia Henderson).

1992). A stone *incensario* stand from Temple XVIII has a more complete record of his death on 9.12.8.9.18 7 Etz'nab 6 Muwan, agreeing with the surviving portion of the date on the Temple XIX tablet (Ringle 1996).[4] Titles for this person occupy the following glyph on the tablet, including the junior-level designation *Ch'ok*, "Emergent One," and a possible place name. The *ch'ok* title signals that Tiwol Chan Mat was not a ruler of Palenque, and both Bassie-Sweet (1991:247-248) and Ringle (1996) present compelling evidence to suggest he was a third son of K'inich Janab Pakal who never assumed the throne. A more detailed discussion of the king's father is presented as part of the historical analysis offered in Chapter 4.

Now that we have a securely placed date in the middle of this very fragmented text, we can see how the earlier Distance Number of ?.4.10 might allow us to reconstruct portions of the missing chronology. The interval of time may or may not include a "Tun" period, but enough survives to show that the Winal and K'in positions of the earlier and missing date

[4] Ringle (1996) correctly reconstructed the dates on the Temple of the Cross *incensario* stand (presented also in Ringle and Smith-Stark [1996:28]). His chronology differs considerably from that presented in Schele and Mathews (1979).

were set at five and eight, respectively. If we consider the possible Distance Numbers set at one Tun intervals, we have several Long Count candidates to consider:

4. 10	9. 12. 8. 5. 8	8 Lamat 16 Yax
1. 4. 10	9. 12. 7. 5. 8	12 Lamat 1 Sak
2. 4. 10	9. 12. 6. 5. 8	3 Lamat 6 Sak
3. 4. 10	9. 12. 5. 5. 8	7 Lamat 11 Sak
4. 4. 10	9. 12. 4. 5. 8	11 Lamat 16 Sak
etc.		

Many others are possible, of course, but already one of the above dates stands out as significant: 9.12.6.5.8 3 Lamat 6 Sak was the birth date of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, as recorded in an Initial Series on the jambs of Temple XVIII. This is unlikely to be a coincidence. We can therefore be fairly sure that this is a missing date and event of the tablet, recorded somewhere in the interval between the opening house dedication record and the death of the ruler's father. Such a sequence of dates would entail an initial backward reckoning from the Initial Series, but, as we shall soon see, a forward count from there on.

The record of the father's death is followed by another Distance Number written at block J2, but of this only an initial coefficient of twelve survives, presumably as the number of K'ins. This is an extremely important clue for ascertaining the next date, for twelve days beyond the day Etz'nab is the tenth day, Ok. Significantly, the next major date in Palenque's history falls on this very day, namely the accession of K'inich Kan Bahlam on 9.12.11.12.10 8 Ok 3 K'ayab, falling some three years later. I think this is most likely the following date on the Temple XIX tablet.

Sixteen glyph blocks are missing until we come to the bottom of column N (Figure 15c) and a partially preserved Distance Number written as >12 Winals and >17 days, with a possible missing Tun component as well, at the top of column O. After this, the only portion of the main text to survive was four glyphs at the very end of the inscription (O6-P7), where we find the name of the ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb and the Palenque Emblem Glyph. The royal name takes a highly unusual form with its prominent turtle shell placed before a

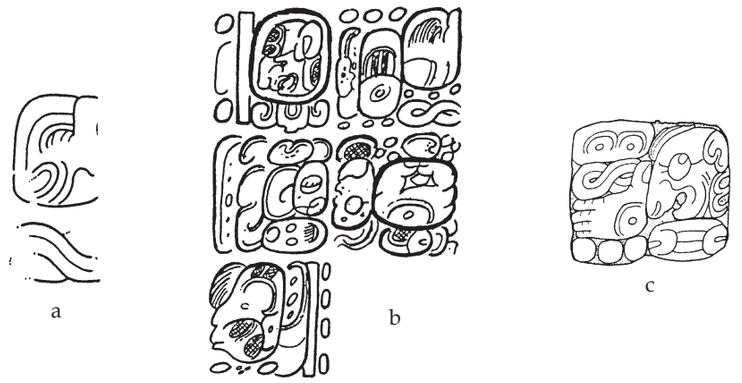


Figure 18. Examples of the "rope-taking" verb from three Palenque texts: (a) **k'a-ma-**ROPE?, T. XIX stucco panel, D2a, (b) a similar glyph in a longer passage, T. XIX platform, west, (c) **U-K'AM-ma-**ROPE? **ch'o-ko**, *u-k'am-*"rope" *ch'ok*, "the young one's rope(?)-taking," T. XVIII stucco glyph (from Schele and Mathews 1979:No.409, drawing by Linda Schele).

macaw head. The carapace is the logogram **AHK** ("turtle"), here replacing the spelling **a-ku** or the turtle's head (likewise **AHK**) found in better-known examples of the king's name. The macaw (**MO'**) is abbreviated in other spellings as a beak, which was previously misread as an **a** variant. The draped water lily pad at the back of the macaw's head alone assumes the role of **NAHB**. The full result is **K'INICH-AHK-la-MO'-NAHB**.

Just before the ruler's name is a "scattering" verb written **U-CHOK?-ji**, *u-chok-ij*, "he casts (incense) on it(?)," an expression that follows other events or verbs to specify the king's role in a larger and previously stated ritual context. Only a portion of the preceding glyph (at O6) naming this ritual survives, but enough is discernible to see that it is the combination **k'a-ma** above a now-missing element that, on the basis of a strong parallel case, we can confidently reconstruct as a twisted and looped rope or cord. This grouping of signs (**k'a-ma-**"rope") is an important verbal expression found in three examples from the inscriptions of Temple XIX, where it appears with the dates 9.15.2.9.0 7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb and precisely one K'atun earlier with 9.14.2.9.0 9 Ajaw 18 Tzek (Figure 18a, b).

The **k'a-ma**-"rope" expression in all likelihood includes the transitive root *k'am*, "to take or receive something," with the looped or twisted subfix likely standing for the object of the verb.[5] Such an unmarked verb, stripped of temporal and person markers, is a nominalized form similar in structure to other impersonal events such as *chum tuun*, "stone seating," *och k'ahk'*, "fire entering" and *k'al tuun*, "stone binding."

Another record of the *k'am*-"rope" event appears in a loose glyph block from the Temple XVIII stucco inscription, but spelled somewhat differently (Figure 18c). Here *k'am* is the familiar "ajaw-in-hand" logograph (**K'AM** or **CH'AM**), replacing the **k'a-ma** syllables of other examples. Using a pictographic convention, the scribe has placed the rope-like element, the direct object, within the hand, much as we find in common spellings of the "God K-in-hand" accession glyph read *k'am k'awil*, or "the K'awil-taking."

The twisted rope sign appears elsewhere in Maya texts, but its reading is still difficult to establish. Perhaps its best-known usage before now was in the spelling of the name of a particular serpent *way* (animal co-essence) shown on some Classic ceramics, where it refers to the draping and braided snake "collar" worn by a fantastic deer (Schele 1990; Grube and Nahm 1994:693) (Figure 19b). A similarly twisted cloth adornment is worn around the neck of two figures on the platform of Temple XIX (see Figure 19c) and also by the younger Kan Bahlam II portrayed on the main tablets of the Cross Group (Figure 19d). One might well consider that the sign's usage in Temple XIX is related to the wearing of this looped costume

[5] The spelling **k'a-ma** raises an important issue about linguistic variation in the Classic inscriptions. We are accustomed to reading this "receive" verb in its expected Ch'olan form *ch'am*, which has for several years been the more established value of the "ajaw-in-hand." This was based originally on an example from Piedras Negras Panel 2, where the logograph takes the prefix **ch'a-** and the suffix **-ma** as phonetic complements, clearly indicating the Ch'olan pronunciation. *K'am*, however, is the Yucatecan cognate. The situation is not unique, for Palenque is unusual for its occasional use of Yucatecan spellings in place of expected Ch'olan forms. Other examples include **su-ku** for *sukun*, "elder brother" (elsewhere spelled as Ch'olan **sa-ku**, *sakun*) and **ka-ba** for *kab*, "earth" (in Ch'olan this would be *chab*). These words alone do not indicate that Palenque was a Yucatecan site, for the overwhelming phonological and morphological patterns in Palenque's inscriptions are decidedly Ch'olan (Houston, Robertson, and Stuart 2000). Rather, such spellings are best seen as subtle indications of close language contact between Ch'olan and Yucatecan speakers in the northwest lowlands during Classic times, if not earlier. The same connection is reflected in Chontal, a Ch'olan language, where "earth" is *kab* instead of *chab* (Kaufman and Norman 1984), exactly as indicated in Palenque's texts.

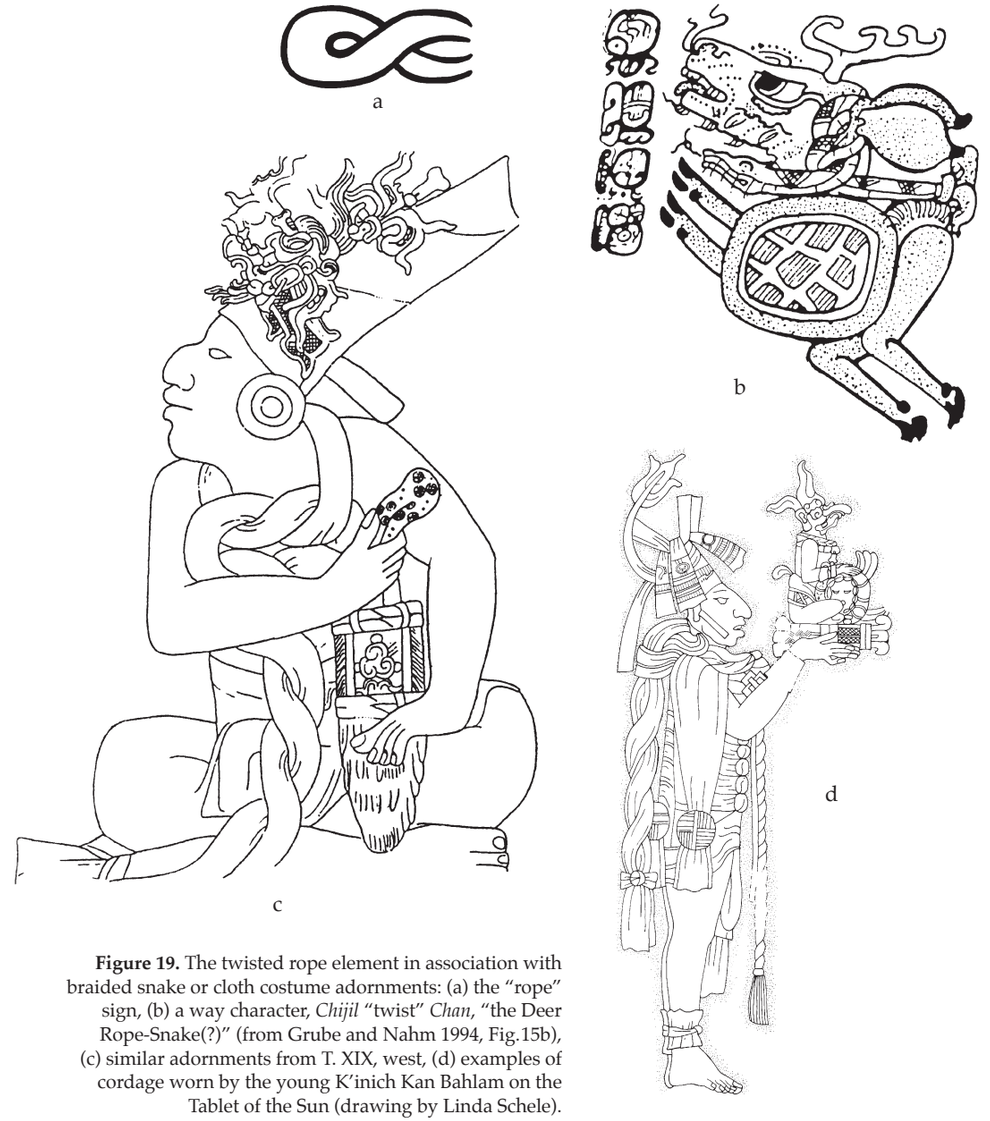


Figure 19. The twisted rope element in association with braided snake or cloth costume adornments: (a) the "rope" sign, (b) a way character, *Chijil* "twist" *Chan*, "the Deer Rope-Snake(?)" (from Grube and Nahm 1994, Fig.15b), (c) similar adornments from T. XIX, west, (d) examples of cordage worn by the young K'inich Kan Bahlam on the Tablet of the Sun (drawing by Linda Schele).

device. As we will see, however, "rope-taking" surely must refer to the curious scene on the west side of the platform, where the main figure (one Salaj Bolon) cradles a massive coil of rope.

In its two other occurrences in Temple XIX, the *k'am*-"rope" glyph appears to mark a significant calendar station within a K'atun. As we will find in discussions to come, the two other dates associated with the verb are 9.14.2.9.0 and 9.15.2.9.0, where each falls on the precise halfway point of the initial Hotun of the K'atun period (2.9.0, or one-eighth of a K'atun). On the stone panel there is good reason to think that a now-missing record of 9.15.2.9.0 7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb originally preceded the **k'a-ma**-"twist" glyph. The same verb appears with this date on the platform text, and we can discount the earlier possibility (9.14.2.9.0) as it falls

well before the reign of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, who is named in the following blocks. This date would also make sense in light of the fact that it falls close to the house dedication noted in the Initial Series of the panel. These two dates, we should recall, were recorded together on the *alfarda*, and we will find them also in the platform's inscription in close association with one another. It seems reasonable, then, that this important date would be recorded on the pier in any case, and the end of the text looks to be a very likely place for it.

Remarkably, even though the extant portion of this long inscription is a small percentage of the entire text, it may be possible to infer all of the dates and events originally recorded. We have seen that one date probably recorded in the inscription was 9.12.11.12.10 8 Ok 3 K'ayab, the accession of K'inich Kan Bahlam, indicated by the "12 K'ins" in the incomplete Distance Number at J2. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that somewhere in this latter portion of the inscription we would expect to find a record of the accession of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, the contemporary king, on 9.14.10.4.2 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab. Moreover, there is ample space in the text for another date to be recorded before the final one reasonably established as 9.15.2.9.0. If the *alfarda* and the platform text of Temple XIX can be used as a basis for comparison, a likely candidate would be the K'atun ending 9.15.0.0.0 4 Ajaw 13 Yax.

The presence of these dates would be no more than suppositions were it not for the partial Distance Number surviving in column N, where the K'in looks to be seventeen or higher, and the Winal twelve or higher. It just so happens that the interval between the accession date 9.14.10.4.2 and the Period Ending 9.15.0.0.0 is 9.13.18, a very good fit with what remains.

Taking all of these clues and speculations together, the following scheme of dates emerges as a probable reconstruction (missing elements of the Calendar Rounds and Distance Numbers are shown in italics; the unwritten Long Counts are in parentheses):

9.15. 2. 7. *16*	*9 Kib 19 K'ayab*	house dedication
2.16. 2. 8	subtract	
(9.12. 6. 5. 8)	*3 Lamat 6 Sak*	birth of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb
2. 4.10	add	
(9.12. 8. 9.18)	*7 Etz'nab* 6 Muwan	death of Tiwol Chan Mat
3. 2.12	add	
(9.12.11.12.10)	*8 Ok 3 K'ayab*	accession of K'inich Kan Bahlam
1.18. 9.12	add	
(9.14.10. 4. 2)	*9 Ik' 5 K'ayab*	accession of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb
9.13.18	add	
(9.15. 0. 0. 0)	*4 Ajaw 13 Yax*	Period Ending
2. 9. 0	add	
(9.15. 2. 9. 0)	*7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb*	Period Ending; "rope-taking"

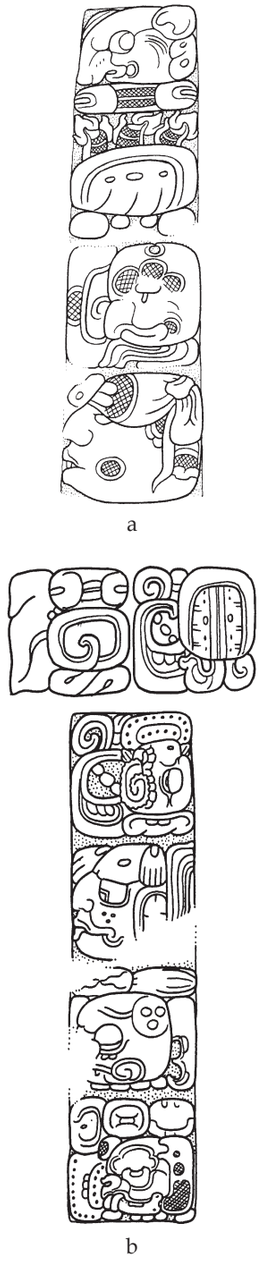
Only the eventual discovery of the missing fragments of the upper text of this tablet will confirm or deny this reconstruction, but in the meantime it appears to be a likely scenario.

The Figures and Name Captions

Now we turn our discussion to the name captions pertaining to the two kneeling figures. The figure at right is dressed in a more elaborate costume and grasps a so-called "incense bag" in his left hand, while his right supports the king. His proper name is written in two glyph blocks, with an extended title phrase following in a separate phrase of four blocks (Figure 20b). The name, written in the first block, is **yo-ko-?-TAL**, repeating the name featured on the fragment of the temple's *alfarda* tablet, but now replacing the **yo-OK** combination by the syllables **yo-ko** (Figure 21). Interestingly, the undeciphered scroll-like main element of the name glyph has two small dots attached at upper left, which in other settings is used to indicate a sign's doubling (see Stuart and Houston 1994:Fig.57), but here it is difficult to know how the repetition works. Other examples of the darkened scroll sign, including its use as an Emblem Glyph in a woman's name at Tonina, suggest that it is a logogram, and Stone (2002) cogently suggests it represents a rubber ball. The title after the name is again the same *yajaw k'ahk'* term that follows his name on the *alfarda*, possibly a militaristic title. Here it has an interesting alternative spelling, **ya-ja-K'AHK'**. The spelling of *yaja(w)* is truncated here, and the **K'AHK'** logogram is noteworthy for displaying the smoke scrolls on its underside. The importance of this man is again emphasized on the panel, and we will see him portrayed again on the temple's decorated platform (Portrait E). Throughout these texts and images he emerges as a major protagonist with some specific ties to Temple XIX, perhaps as a paramount religious official for the building.

The extended name phrase then reads down to a column of four glyphs just beneath the elbow of the kneeling figure at right (see Figure 20b). The first of these glyphs is **ya-ja-K'UH-HUUN-na**, the possessed form of the common title *ajk'uhuun*, used throughout the Maya area for a certain category of secondary or subsidiary lords (Houston 1993; Lacadena 1996; Jackson and Stuart 2001). Here the possessed form, indicated by its *(u)y-* ergative pronoun prefix, states that the kneeling figure is the "*ajk'uhuun* of" K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, named in the remaining three glyphs. The king's name is written **K'INICH AHK-la-MO'-NAHB,** a form recognizable from other Palenque inscriptions, including others from Temple XIX. The king's "Holy Lord" title closes the extended name phrase.

Despite being so widespread, it is difficult to understand the literal meaning of the *ajk'uhuun* title mentioned here and in many other Maya inscriptions. Lacadena (1996) has offered an important analysis of the glyph as meaning "messenger" (*ahk'-huun*). Recent concurrent research by Houston and Grube, working independently, has led to the suggestion that it means "He of the Holy Books," in which case the glyph would be analyzed morphologically as **AJ-K'UHUL-HUUN**. Coe and Kerr (1997) have taken this to be a title for scribes and bookkeepers. I am not as yet convinced of these decipherments based on



a

b

Figure 20. The figure name captions from the Temple XIX stone panel: (a) name and titles of the lower left figure, (b) name and titles of the figure at right.



Figure 21. Names of a featured protagonist from Temple XIX, as recorded on: (a) the alfarda tablet, (b) the platform, (c) the stone panel.

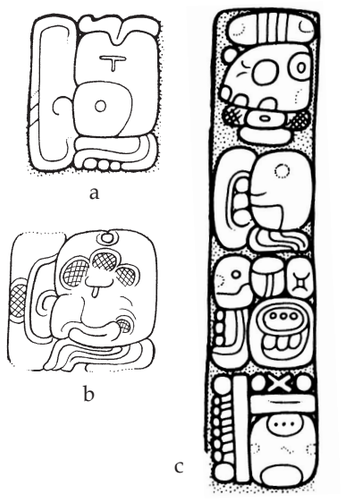


Figure 22. Examples of *yichan ajaw*, "the lord's maternal uncle": (a) Yaxchilan, Lnt. 58, C (from Graham 1979:125), (b) T. XIX stone panel, figure caption, (c) Yaxchilan, Lnt. 9, C1-C4 (from Graham and Von Euw 1977:29).

"book," for generally the **HUUN** logogram is a late and rare element in the title. Alternatively, I believe the agentive word may be based on the derived transitive root *k'uh-Vn*, meaning "to guard something" or "to venerate." The semantics are somewhat complex, but the full meanings of *ajk'uhuun* could be "one who guards (objects)" or "one who obeys," perhaps in reference to court officials who oversaw the material goods within the palaces (Jackson and Stuart 2001). Whatever its precise sense, the title clearly refers to many of the most important nobles within Classic Maya kingdoms. Copan gives us an interesting case for comparison, for *ajk'uhuun* lords were clearly of enough social and political importance there to warrant their own small palaces and wards. The best example is Group 9N-8 located some distance from the main acropolis at Copan (Webster 1989). The famous inscribed hieroglyphic bench from Structure 9N-82 records that the local lord was the "*ajk'uhuun* of" the current Copan king, expressing the same relationship given in the caption of the Temple XIX panel.

Now we can turn to the kneeling figure at left, a mustachioed man simply clad in a loincloth who supports the lower beak of the king's bird costume. His name caption appears in four glyphs arranged vertically below his arms (Figure 20a), but the symmetry of the panel suggests that it is probably incomplete, and that the first two or three glyphs of the caption, above the head, are on a still-missing fragment. The first surviving block is the familiar designation **ch'o-ko**, for *ch'ok*, conveying the sense of a "junior lord" or, more literally, "emergent one." The second glyph is possibly a proper name for the individual, but at present very hard to understand. The larger element above the **-la** seems based on a logogram ending in -**N**. The upper part of the glyph shows three sprout-like plants and may constitute a separate sign.[6] Finally, the last two glyphs together read **yi-cha-ni AJAW**, for *y-ichaan ajaw*, "(maternal) uncle of the lord" (D. Stuart 1997). The **cha** element of **yi-cha-ni** has the distinctive "*ik*'" element in the eye, but shows some unique animated characteristics resembling a snake, *chan*. One wonders

[6] An early variant of this sign or sign combination occurs in Tomb 6 from Río Azul, Guatemala, in the name of a building or tomb, **YAX-?-la-NAAH** (see Houston 1998:Fig. 15b).



Figure 23. Detail of the Temple XIX stone panel, showing the face and hand of the kneeling figure at left.

if the scribe chose to modify the **cha** sign in this way in order to construct a "partial rebus" relying on the resemblence of *ichaan* and *chan*.

We can best understand this reference to a maternal uncle by turning to the inscriptions of Yaxchilan, where two examples appear (Figure 22a, c). These are similarly written *y-ichan ajaw*, in reference to a man named **CHAK-JOL-mi** (*Chak Joloom?*). In both portraits he is shown with the young Shield Jaguar II, and the settings of the kinship statements would seem to show that the "lord" is the future king. On the Palenque panel we can readily conclude that the kneeling man is the maternal uncle of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, given that no other member of the royal family is depicted in the scene. Such was my initial interpretation, but Stanley Guenter has pointed out to me (personal communication 2000) that the term *yichaan ajaw* here may still hold the specific meaning shown by its use at Yaxchilan, where the "lord" is the heir apparent (as discussions later in this chapter will show, the successor of the king may be depicted on the stucco panel decorating this same pier). For now, it seems most likely that he is the kings's maternal uncle, the brother of Ix Kinuw Mat (see Figure 11).

The man's portrait has one interesting feature that is perhaps worthy of a little speculation. As Joel Skidmore pointed out to me during an inspection of the panel, the man's fingers seem shortened and lack nails (Figure 23). We will find in Chapter 3 that one other person has similar hands in the art of Temple XIX, namely an attendant depicted in the platform's accession scene (Portrait G) with the name **MUWAAN-ni cha-nu-la a-AHN?**. He too has a moustache—a rare feature in Classic Maya portraiture—and there is strong reason to suggest the two portraits may be of the same person.

To summarize the main points concerning the stone panel, we can say that the inscription features the dedication date of Temple XIX and in all likelihood once recorded a number of familiar historical dates from Palenque's royal history. The Period Ending ritual mentioned in the last few glyphs is perhaps "rope-taking," and some clues to its significance will emerge from discussions of the nearby stucco panel and platform text of Temple XIX. In the ac-

companying portrait the king "wears" a large head of a cormorant (*mat*), which in some way probably alludes to the supernatural place named Matwil or Matawil, featured throughout Palenque's inscriptions as an Emblem Glyph for gods and historical rulers. Once more the *yajaw k'ahk'* official (Yok ? Tal) appears as an important ritual participant. The other kneeling figure may be the maternal uncle (*ichan*) of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb.

II. The Stucco Panel

The temple's central pier was also decorated with a large stucco frieze on its left or western side (Figure 5). The polychrome relief depicts a single striding figure in profile wearing an immense costume of a bird's head, similar in most respects to that worn by the king on the accompanying stone panel. Twelve hieroglyphs accompany the portrait (Figure 24a), each glyph painted dark blue against a red background. The inscription is difficult to read in places, yet enough is understandable to allow several new insights into the ritualism and dynastic history of Late Classic Palenque.

The Dates

The inscription cites three Calendar Round dates, each accompanied by a short verbal statement (Figure 24b). No Distance Numbers connect them, but they can nevertheless be securely placed in the Long Count as:

A1: (9.13.17. 9. 0) 3 Ajaw 3 Yaxk'in
B2: (9.14. 0. 0. 0) 6 Ajaw 13 Muwan
C2: (9.14. 2. 9. 0) 9 Ajaw 18 Tzek

The middle of these can only be the K'atun ending 9.14.0.0.0, as confirmed by the glyph which follows at C1, **CHUM-TUUN-ni** or *chum tuun*, "stone-seating." Such expressions are used throughout texts at Palenque, Pomona, and some neighboring sites to describe the initiation of a series of twenty ritual stones that symbolized the twenty units of the K'atun period (D. Stuart 1996). The K'atun ending in the second date therefore serves as a welcome anchor for the placement of the other two dates in the Long Count, as given above. Significantly, all three dates are earlier than most cited in Temple XIX's inscriptions. The building's dedication ceremony—what the Maya called an *och k'ahk'* or "fire entering"—was on 9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 K'ayab, a day recorded prominently in the three other texts of the temple (the *alfarda* tablet, the stone panel and the platform) and in Temple XXI. The initiation of both buildings came nearly twenty years after the latest of the three dates in the stucco inscription, indicating that the stucco panel commemorates times and events that occurred significantly before it was made. The possibility remains that the stucco sculpture is even later than the temple's dedication date, having been created sometime after the other monuments of the gallery.

A simple but interesting numerological pattern links all three dates in the inscription. Taken in sequence, each is separated by the same interval of 2.9.0, or 900 days. While never noticed before as a meaningful subdivision in Maya time reckoning, 2.9.0 is a "half Hotun," the exact midpoint within the ritually important span of five Tuns (5.0.0). Exactly five Tuns thus separate the initial and final date. The significance of this pattern will be discussed as we consider the details of the narrative and the glyphs within the text.

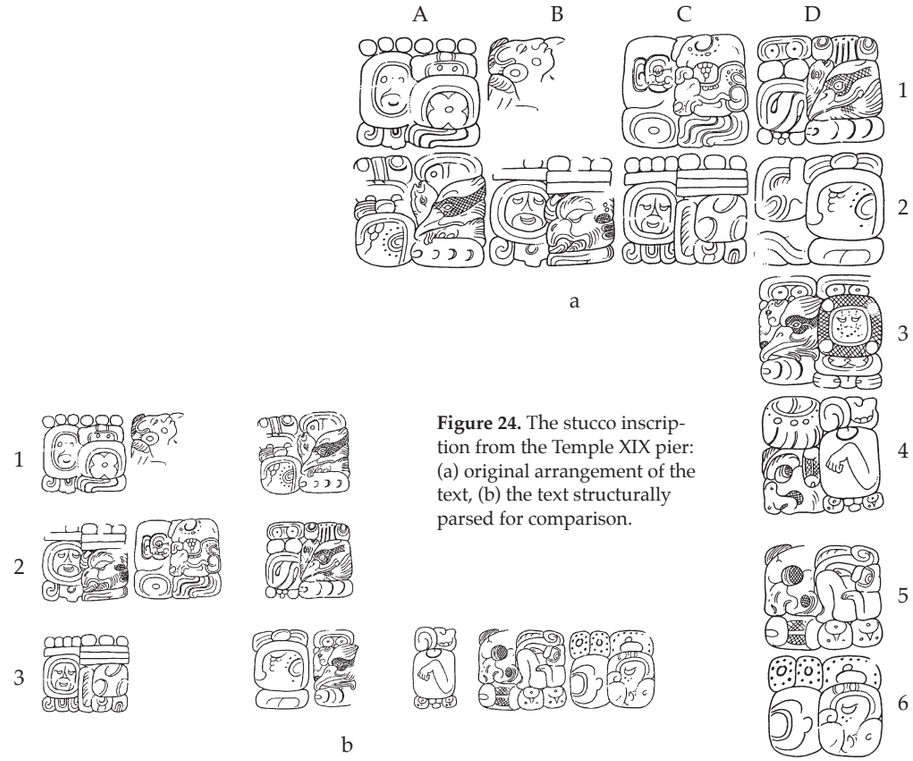


Figure 24. The stucco inscription from the Temple XIX pier: (a) original arrangement of the text, (b) the text structurally parsed for comparison.

The Events

An unusual verb or predicate follows the opening date 3 Ajaw 3 Yaxk'in. The glyph block at B1 is partially lost, but the upper left corner displays a man's head turned upward, just above a feathered wing. Enough is preserved to indicate that it is an example of a "bird-man" sign attested in other inscriptions from Palenque, Tonina, and possibly Tikal. The single other example I know from Palenque comes from the Temple XXI platform (Figure 25a), where it accompanies the very same 9.13.17.9.0 date (D. Stuart 2000b). The form of the glyph indicates that it is not a verb in the proper sense; rather its presence after the date suggests that it is a descriptive term or noun for the date itself.

Although the reading of the bird-man glyph is unclear, examples from Tonina (where it is particularly common) sometimes take a **-ti** suffix, and strongly suggest that the full-figure bird is the **MUT** "bird" logogram known from other texts. The human head resembling **XIB** may actually be a separate sign read before **MUT**, suggesting the combination **XIB-MUT** ("male bird"?) as a possible decipherment.[7] Whatever the case, it is significant that the bird-man glyph is consistently associated with half-Hotun (2.9.0) dates like the ones we have seen

[7] The rationale for this tentative **XIB-MUT** reading comes in part from yet another tablet from Tonina, where the same **MUT** bird with **-ti** suffix displays the head of God D, read **ITZAMNAAJ**. The combination is almost surely **ITZAMNAAJ-MUT**, which I have suggested on the basis of other inscriptions to be the probable name of the so-called Principal Bird Deity.

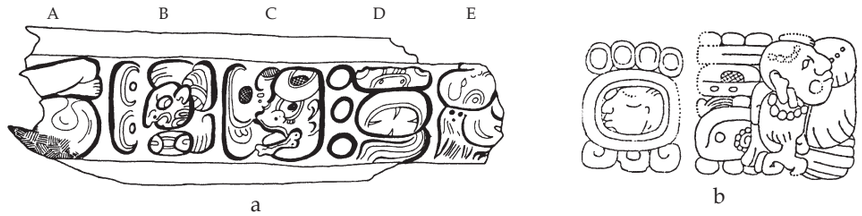


Figure 25. Examples of the "bird-man" glyph at Palenque and Tonina: (a) Palenque, T. XXI slab (from Schele and Mathews 1979:No.553), (b) Tonina, M. 141, C3b (from Graham and Mathews 1999:173).

on the Temple XIX pier.

Tonina Monument 141 cites the bird-man in connection with the date 9.13.7.9.0 4 Ajaw 13 Ch'en (Figure 25b). It stands alone without any other verb or protagonist, suggesting that it somehow describes some general characteristic of the date, rather than an action of any kind. Another Tonina stela (as yet undesignated) bears the date 9.14.12.9.0 8 Ajaw 8 Zip on its base, once more with the bird-man glyph.[8] There it follows a standard "half-period" glyph (*u-tanlam-il*), indicating that the Maya themselves viewed the date as the midpoint of the five Tun period.

Grouping the known bird-man citations from Palenque and Tonina, we find that their dates fall into a pattern clearly related to that already described for the three dates of the Temple XIX stucco text:

9.13. 7.9.0	4 Ajaw 13 Ch'en	Tonina: Monument 141
9.13.17.9.0	3 Ajaw 3 Yaxk'in	Palenque: T. XIX stucco; T. XXI slab
9.14.12.9.0	8 Ajaw 8 Zip	Tonina: undesignated stela base
9.18. 7.9.0	7 Ajaw 18 Wo	Tonina: Monument 1[9]
9.18.12.9.0	13 Ajaw 13 Pop	Tonina: undesignated stela base

Precisely ten Tuns (10.0.0) separate the first and second date, and fifteen Tuns (15.0.0) fall between the second and third. Five Tuns (the common denominator of all the intervals) separate the final two dates, and all the dates again fall on the midpoints of the four standard Hotun subdivisions of the K'atun (2.9.0, 7.9.0, 12.9.0, and 17.9.0). It appears, then, that the bird-man in some way marks a previously unknown ritual or calendar cycle. But it is interesting that the last date in the stucco text from Temple XIX, 9.14.2.9.0, is of the same type, yet no bird-man glyph accompanies that statement.[10]

[8] This small monument was displayed at the Museo Arqueológico de Palenque in June, 1999, as part of a special exhibition organized for the Tercera Mesa Redonda de Palenque. The dates and interpretations given are based on my inspection of the monument at that time. A number designation will be given to the stone in readying it for publication in the Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions.

[9] The published drawing of Tonina Monument 1 (Mathews 1983:14) does not indicate the bird-man glyph very clearly, but it is evident in the accompanying photograph with a **-ti** suffix.

[10] Several Tonina inscriptions highlight similar stations of the "half-Hotun" period, but again without an associated bird-man hieroglyph. These texts include the so-called "Pestac stela," with the date 9.11.12.9.0, and M.104, a stela base recording 10.0.7.9.0 3 Ajaw 3 Sak. A few as-yet-unnumbered monuments at Tonina also record these unusual Period Endings, including a stela base citing 9.13.7.9.0 4 Ajaw 13 Ch'en, another base dedicated shortly after a royal accession on 9.13.17.9.0 3 Ajaw 3 Yaxk'in (the same date that opens the stucco text from Temple XIX), and a figural stela celebrating 9.14.12.9.0 8 Ajaw 8 Zip. The last example is of special interest because the date is called *u yax k'altuun*, "the first stone-binding," of the current ruler, emphasizing its intrinsic quality as a Period Ending (Simon Martin, personal communication 2000).

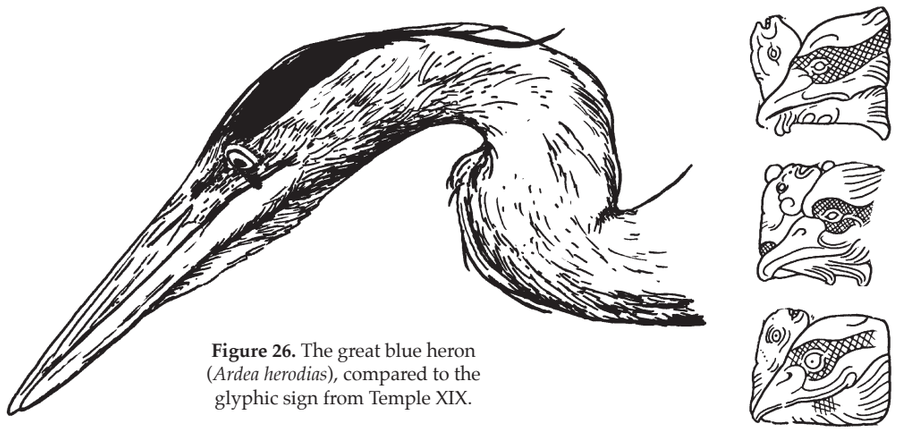


Figure 26. The great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), compared to the glyphic sign from Temple XIX.



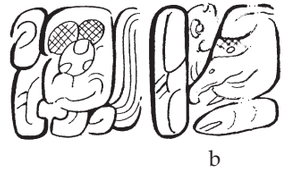


Figure 27. The heron sign in other settings: (a) name caption of a figure from the T. XIX platform, west side, (b) edge inscription of the T. XXI platform.

The third glyph of the stucco text (block A2) follows the bird-man and provides more specific information about the opening date. Its first part is **U-NAAH-hi**, *u-naah*, "(it is) his/her/its first…." The second half of A2 is also prefixed by **U**- (though a different sign variant) before an intriguing main sign showing a crested bird consuming a fish. The water bird sign has no known reading, but the darkened banding around the eye suggests its species identification as a great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*) (Figure 26) or possibly an osprey.[11] This is followed in turn by the subfix -**le**.

Jumping ahead somewhat, we will come to find two other examples of the same **U**-"heron"-**le** glyph in the stucco inscription (at D1b and D3a)—a remarkable fact considering the short length of the entire text. Each appears in direct association with one of the three dates, and it is probably no coincidence that these dates are all connected numerologically. With the *u-naah* "first" modifier beforehand, I suspect that **U-"**heron"-**le** can be analyzed as a nominalized verb (as in "the first 'x'-ing"), or perhaps more likely as a station or office of some sort. Whatever action or term the heron glyph records, it is the key topic of the inscription. Unfortunately, its decipherment is unlikely until more examples can be found;

[11] Words for "heron" vary widely across Mayan languages and seem to offer little clue for the value of this sign. Given the form of the bird sign in this text, it is interesting that in Tzeltal all types of herons are classed under the term *hti'choy*, or "fish eaters" (Hunn 1977).

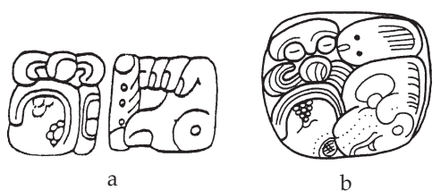
The identification of the bird sign as an osprey also seems plausible given the darkened eye markings, as suggested independently by Guillermo Bernal Romero (2002) and Geoffrey Heal (personal communication 2003). The elongated form of the beak more closely resembles that of a heron, perhaps, but the question had best be left open for the time being.

only two other cases of the glyph are known, from the platform of Temple XIX and from a curious passage from Temple XXI. In the first instance the heron glyph occurs in the name caption of a seated noble, seemingly as a title or personal reference, but without any of the affixation seen in the stucco inscription (Figure 27a). The titular nature of the glyph is supported by its important appearance in Temple XXI as part of the phrase *wa'-wan ta ?-el*, "he stands in/as the ?" (Figure 27b). Here, the subject is *Upakal K'inich*, whom we will very shortly encounter as the protagonist of the Temple XIX stucco, and significantly the event recorded takes place on the very same day recorded here—9.13.17.9.0 3 Ajaw 3 Yax. In all likelihood the Temple XXI record offers an elaboration on the terse phraseology from the stucco text, specifying that Upakal K'inich "stood up" in whatever capacity the bird sign specifies.

Block C2 is the third of the evenly spaced dates, 9 Ajaw 18 Tzek, or 9.14.2.9.0. The accompanying verb phrase at D2a is a slightly damaged glyph, consisting of the sign **k'a**, a second missing element, and the twisted or looped rope. This is surely the same *k'am*-"rope" expression already encountered near the end of the stone panel's main inscription (see Figure 18). A complete example appears in the text from the west side of Temple XIX's platform, in connection with the date 9.15.2.9.0 7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb (Figure 18b). As noted, I suspect that this expression may describe some ritual associated with the midpoint (2.9.0) of the first Hotun of a K'atun, although there is perhaps more to it than this, as discussions at the end of this chapter will try to address.

Returning to the stucco text, the second portion of block D2 is **hi-li**, which precedes the third and final example of the heron glyph with its familiar affixes, at D3. The preceding passages have already talked of the "first" and "second" instances of this heron event or action, and it seems that **hi-li** here is somehow parallel to those ordinal numbers (see Figure 24b). Significantly, *hil* is an intransitive root in Ch'olan Mayan languages meaning "to end, rest, finish" (Kaufman and Norman 1984), and in this setting it probably refers to the "ending" or "resting" of the three-stage ritual process involving the "heron" action. Aside from an appearance in passage W-8 on the Temple XIX platform, the only other known instances of the word *hil* come from two examples of the expression *hil ok* (literally "rest-leg") cited at the widely separated sites of Copan and Tortuguero; both seem to relate to the end-point of a journey (see D. Stuart 2004) (Figure 28). In the stucco inscription from Palenque, it thus seems that the act of "taking the rope" also saw the "resting" of the ceremonial cycle tied to the half-Hotun interval of 2.9.0.

After the last of the heron glyphs we come to the first personal name of the stucco inscription, written **U-PAKAL-K'INICH**, or Upakal K'inich, "The Sun God's Shield." The name takes the title **ba-ch'o-ko**, for *Ba(ah) Ch'ok*, meaning "Principal Heir." Although this person is not yet among the familiar characters in Palenque's history, recent suggestions by Bernal Romero (1999, 2002) have convincingly shown that Upakal K'inich is the name of a lord who ruled at Palenque after K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. Being the only name in the stucco text, we must conclude that the portrait on the stucco pier is Upakal K'inich as the heir apparent,



a b

Figure 28. Examples of *hil ok*, "rest-leg," at Copan and Tortuguero: (a) Copan, Altar Q (**hi-li o-ke**) (drawing by Linda Schele), (b) Tortuguero, Monument 8 (**U-hi-li-OK**) (drawing by Lucia Henderson).



a b c



d



e

Figure 29. Upakal K'inich: (a) portrait from the Temple XXI platform, (b) tablet fragments recovered from the Temple of the Foliated Cross and the Palace (drawing by Linda Schele), (c) name glyphs from the T. XIX stucco panel, (d) caption from the T. XXI platform, (e) name glyphs from the horizontal text of the T. XXI platform.

shown before assuming the throne.

Upakal K'inich is mentioned and portrayed on the Temple XXI platform as well (Figure 29a), and in his later records he bears the slightly more elaborate royal name Upakal K'inich Janab Pakal (Figure 29b), clearly evoking the memory of his illustrious ancestor (possibly his grandfather). This ruler remains very obscure, and no accession date is known for him. However, he was in office on 9.15.10.10.13 8 Ben 16 Kumk'u, a date cited on the K'an Tok panel for the accession of a junior lord under the auspices of the Palenque king (Bernal Romero 1999).[12] This falls only a few years after the last known date from Temple XIX, 9.15.5.0.0, when K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb celebrated the Period Ending. Evidently Upakal K'inich Janab Pakal succeeded K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb as king at some point between these two dates.

The title *baah ch'ok* shows us that Upakal K'inich was considered the heir to Palenque's throne, but it is difficult to reconcile this with the final date cited in the stucco inscription. 9.14.2.9.0 9 Ajaw 18 Tzek fell within the reign of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam, when that king was nearing seventy years of age. The man who eight years later would take the name K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb was in his mid-thirties at this time. It is therefore difficult to see how Upakal K'inich could be named as a *baah ch'ok* at a time when his own predecessor in office had not yet assumed the throne. It instead seems likely that Upakal K'inich was the "Principal Heir" during the reign of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, when the text was written and produced. We know the three dates on the stucco panel record retrospective history, but the *baah ch'ok* title is probably to be considered contemporaneous with the stucco panel's later composition.

For some time I considered the possibility that Upakal K'inich was the son of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, an interpretation echoed by Bernal Romero's (2003) own understanding of Palenque's history. This may well be so, but with the discovery of the Temple XXI platform it seems plausible that he was a younger brother of the reigning king. No direct relationship is ever provided for these historical figures, but it is significant that the scene from Temple XXI presents both lords as adults, flanking their venerated ancestor K'inich Janab Pakal. If the scene corresponds to the opening date of the Temple XXI monument (9.13.17.9.0)—and this is by no means obvious—then the future king K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb was just over thirty years old, far too young to have adult offspring. In the accompanying texts of Temple XXI, Upakal K'inich is named not just as *Baah Ch'ok*, but as *Baah Ch'ok K'uhul Baakal Ajaw* (Figure 29d), a curious title that combines "heir" and "Holy Lord" at a time before he assumed the throne (Temple XXI's platform was dedicated before Upakal K'inich's accession). More will be said of these complex historical issues in Chapter 4.

Back now to the stucco inscription, in the second half of block D4 is a familiar glyph with a main sign representing a left arm, ending with **-NAL-la**. A **yi-** prefix is found on other examples of this "arm" glyph, sometimes infixed into the neck area of the main sign, as may be the case here. The glyph customarily interposes between two names, the second often being a god's designation, and it seems to be some sort of possessed noun or relationship glyph (Figure 30). The environment of the arm glyph, along with the **yi-** prefix and **-NAL** ending, has raised the possibility that it is a variant of *y-ichnal*, "together with, in the company of" (Orejel 1996), but on closer review this equivalence seems problematic. The arm seems more

[12] The so-called K'an Tok panel records a series of junior-level accessions overseen by Palenque kings over the course of several centuries. Bernal Romero (1999) interprets the protagonists as rulers of a subordinate site in Palenque's domain. While this may be true, it seems equally plausible, if not more likely, that the accessions pertain to a priestly office or position within Palenque's local court society.

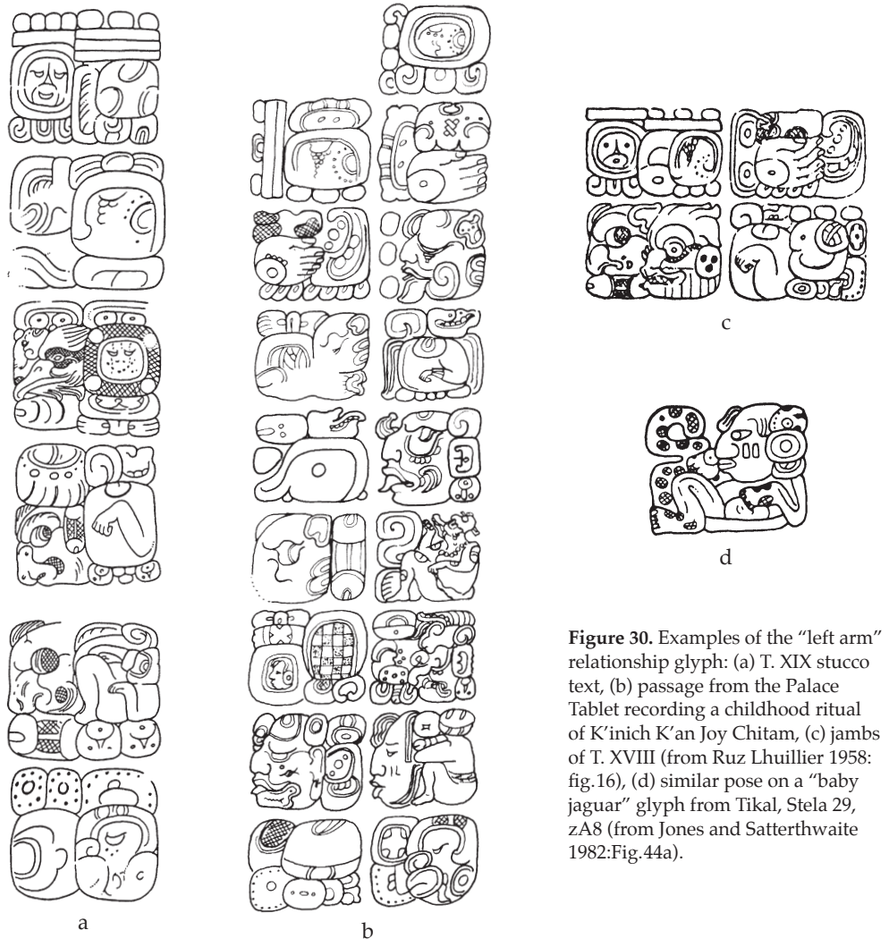


Figure 30. Examples of the "left arm" relationship glyph: (a) T. XIX stucco text, (b) passage from the Palace Tablet recording a childhood ritual of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam, (c) jambs of T. XVIII (from Ruz Lhuillier 1958: fig.16), (d) similar pose on a "baby jaguar" glyph from Tikal, Stela 29, zA8 (from Jones and Satterthwaite 1982:Fig.44a).

thematically restricted than the widespread *y-ichnal*, for it often appears after the names of children or young people. For example, on the jamb inscription of Temple XVIII (Figure 30c) it follows the pre-accession name of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb as a boy, and on the Palace Tablet it follows the youth name of the preceding king, K'inich K'an Joy Chitam (Figure 30b). In both instances the event is a youth's ceremony I read as *k'al mayij*, "sacrifice- or gift-binding." The Temple XIX example provides a third case from Palenque where the arm relationship glyph appears with youth or pre-accession rites. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the arm sign is visually similar to the pose of infants in Maya art and iconography (Figure 30d), as we see in the portrait name of GII of the Palenque Triad, given later in block D5.[13]

[13] At Piedras Negras, two other examples of the "left arm" relationship glyph seem to be related to young people. On Panel 3, it occurs in the main text in a passage describing an Early Classic ritual that is probably depicted in the accompanying scene. At least one figure, standing behind the ruler, is a young boy. On the shells of Burial 5, the twelve-year-old "Lady K'atun" is named beside another example of the "arm" relationship glyph (here a right arm, it seems), which apparently establishes some connection between the girl and a woman named in the next block.

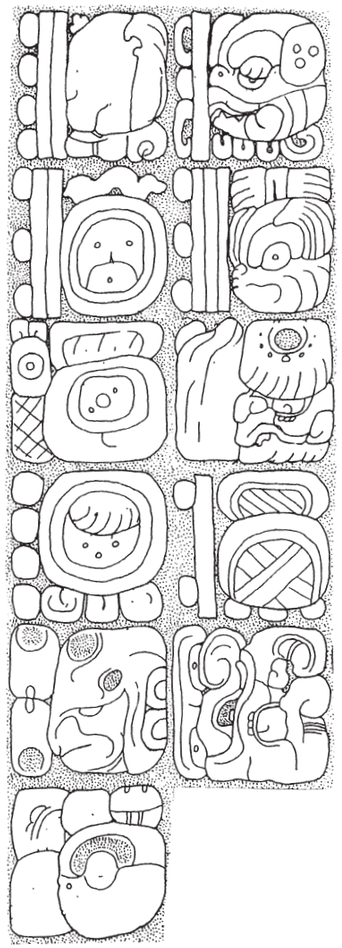


Figure 31. A "half-Hotun" date used as a calendrical anchor, from Palenque, Temple of the Inscriptions, east panel (drawing by Linda Schele).

Despite such contextual and visual clues, it is difficult to establish a viable reading of the "left arm" relationship glyph, if it is in fact distinct from *y-ichnal*. In the cases from Palenque and elsewhere, the name written after the arm expression is of a god or a lord of higher rank than the youthful protagonist, suggesting that, like *y-ichnal*, the arm glyph helps to specify who sanctioned, oversaw, or attended to the ritual concerned.

The name after the arm glyph in the stucco inscription is, as noted, GII of the Palenque Triad (D5). Like Upakal K'inich, GII bears the designation **ch'o-ko**, *ch'ok*, "young one," presumably because of his infant aspect. The inscription closes at D6 with a "title" or designation for GII based on the sign **K'UH**, "god," with two prefixed signs of unknown value. The second of these prefixes, the larger of the two, resembles Maya representations of an eye, so perhaps the title designated GII as the "?-eyed god." The singling-out of GII as the divine participant in or overseer of the final of the "heron" events is extremely interesting, but once more not easy to explain.

The stucco inscription thus relates a narrative of three evenly spaced rituals, the "first," "second," and "last" of a series spanning five years. All three events are described by an undeciphered heron sign, which may in some way be related conceptually to the water bird costume worn by the protagonist, Upakal K'inich. The use of the verb *wa'*, "stand up," in conjunction with the heron sign in Temple XXI's inscription may hold an important clue for interpreting the odd costume both he and the king wear on the pier of Temple XIX. Certainly the image conveyed in the glyph—a bird taking a fish in its beak—is repeated on a far larger scale by the costumes themselves, even though the bird species of the costumes is not a heron (the glyphic expression would be expected to be more conventionalized, of course). It is worth recalling that on Temple XXI the event is standing "as" or "in" whatever the heron sign means; from this it is tempting to consider that it signifies the costume itself, or the station the costume conveys. Significantly, the act of standing up or becoming erect (*wa'*) is also visually suggested by the attendants to the king depicted on the pier, who visibly support the unwieldy outfit.

Returning to the dates from the stucco text, we have seen that the three rituals are each spaced 2.9.0 (900 days) apart, and fall over two decades before the dedication date of Temple XIX. They are therefore retrospective records of a specific ritual cycle involving the would-be heir to the throne, possibly the first son or brother of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, who came to rule sometime after the latter's death and before the accession of his younger brother or nephew, K'inich K'uk' Bahlam. The deity GII has some involvement with these rituals, but it is difficult to know in what capacity. The last of the heron events also involves a curious rite described as something like "taking the rope," an event mentioned in another text from Temple XIX in connection with 9.15.2.9.0 7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb, precisely one K'atun later.

I am inclined to see the glyphs that immediately follow the first and last dates in this inscription—the bird-man verb and "rope-taking"—as structural partners to the "stone seating" glyph used simply to describe the calendrical significance of the middle date. All would serve like-in-kind roles as descriptions of stations within the K'atun period, like the far more common and familiar "Hotun" marker glyphs used to name the quarters of the K'atun. The bird-man is found in several cases at Palenque and Tonina to mark dates that are divisible by one-eighth portions of the K'atun. The two known instances of "rope-taking" events (if this is the true reading) occur on dates that fall on 2.9.0, or the initial one-eighth within a K'atun. It is possible that "rope-taking" therefore describes a specific rite associated with the first 900 days of a K'atun, but this remains to be firmly established.

At any rate, there is now good reason to believe that the Maya recognized the one-eighth subdivisions of the K'atun as ritually significant, even if these were not so routinely commemorated in Maya inscriptions as a whole. Joel Skidmore (personal communication 2000) has pointed out to me an example that proves the point very well. The east tablet of the Temple of the Inscriptions cites the Calendar Round 13 Ajaw 18 Mak (M7, N7), corresponding to 9.8.17.9.0, or seven-eighths of the K'atun (Figure 31). The text does not mention any event for this date; instead, it is a self-evident sort of Period Ending that provides a chronological anchor for the event recorded in the next blocks, namely Palenque's conquest at the hands of Calakmul on 9.8.17.15.14.

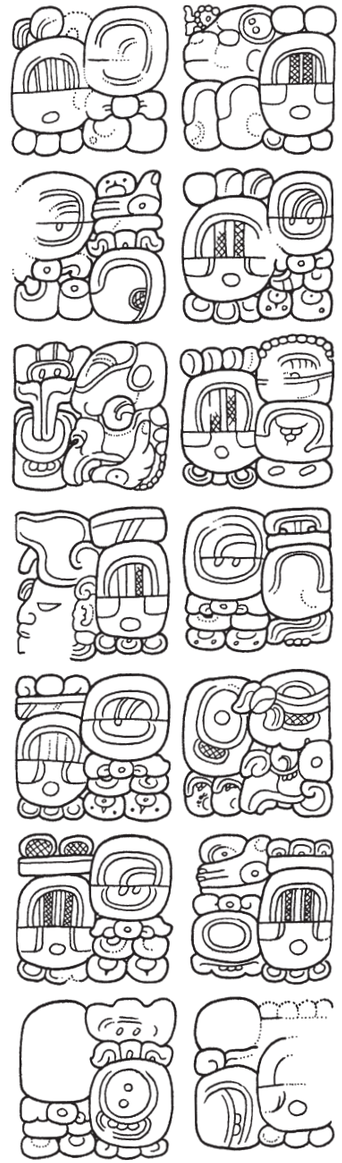


Figure 32. The inscription from the south side of Copan, Stela J.

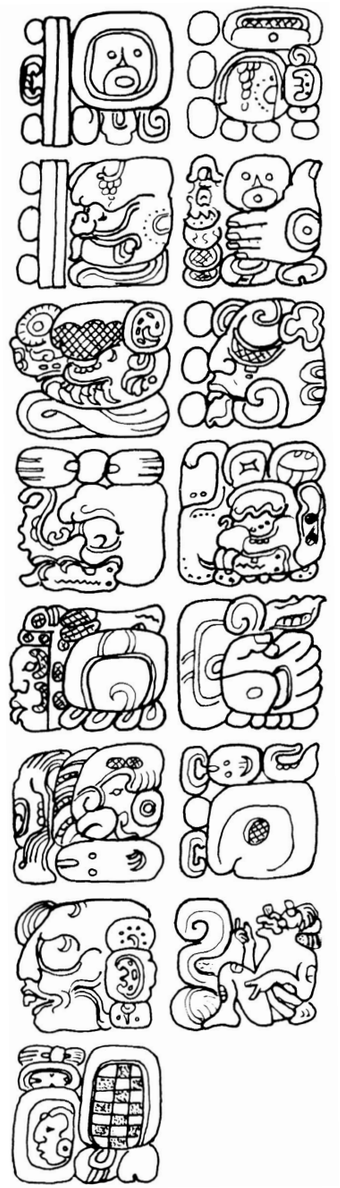


Figure 33. Mention of a "rope-taking" ritual on a Period Ending, from the Palace Tablet, G10-I7 (drawing by Linda Schele).

Relevant to these curious patterns is Stela J of distant Copan, which presents a list of individual Tuns within a K'atun period, each accompanied by its proper glyphic designation (Figure 32). Some of these are quite familiar: "first five Tuuns," the *tanlam* "half period" term, and so forth. Yet three of the terms describe actions or rituals involving the word *k'am* or *ch'am*, "take, receive," perhaps strengthening the notion that the "rope-taking" event is a similar sort of term used to designate or describe a set period or subdivision of the K'atun.

The stucco panel must be considered in the context of pre-accession rituals involving young kings-to-be, for the "rope-taking" event recorded in the Temple XIX stucco seems to concern young or yet-to-be-established rulers. We cannot know Upakal K'inich's age at the time of the ritual cycle commemorated (his birth date is unknown), yet there are important connections to be drawn between the dates and events of the stucco pier and other known rituals involving youngsters.

On the Palace Tablet, we read of a "rope-taking" rite involving K'inich K'an Joy Chitam as a young man, on 9.11.13.0.0 12 Ajaw 3 Ch'en, many years before his accession (Figure 33). Here, however, the event is somewhat different, written **U-K'AM-wa CHAN-?**, or *u-k'am-aw chan ..?..*, "he takes the snake 'rope'." (Notice the naturalistic depiction of the twisted fibers within the rope element.) The combination of **CHAN** and the "rope" recalls the imagery on the "serpent deer" *way* entity mentioned above, and we can perhaps imagine that the object taken in this ceremony was a snake or snake effigy worn around the heir's neck, like on the deer figure.

On the hieroglyphic jambs of Temple XVIII we read that the young K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb participated in a pre-accession event on 9.13.2.9.0 11 Ajaw 18 Yax, when fifteen years of age, nearly three decades before his own accession to office. Most of the associated text in the upper portion of the south jamb is missing, unfortunately, but the date once more is significant, ending in 2.9.0. The final date of the Temple XIX stucco text (9.14.2.9.0) comes one K'atun afterwards. We therefore have two independent records of royal heirs participating in rituals on this chronologically significant station. One wonders if perhaps these less important stations of the K'atun were considered to be the ritual responsibilities of rulers-in-training.



Detail of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb from the stone panel of the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the kneeling figure at left on the stone panel of the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the kneeling figure at left on the stone panel.



Detail of the kneeling figure at right on the stone panel of the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the kneeling figure at right on the stone panel.



Detail of the stone panel from the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the stone panel from the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the stone panel from the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of Upakal K'inich from the stucco panel of the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the stucco panel from the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the stucco panel from the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the stucco panel from the Temple XIX pier.



Detail of the stucco panel from the Temple XIX pier.

Chapter 3.

The Platform



Of the extraordinary monuments discovered in Temple XIX, the most significant is the unusual decorated platform built near the northeast corner of the structure's interior gallery. This rectangular construction bore two sculpted panels on its west and south faces, each with a figural scene masterfully carved in low relief and a lengthy hieroglyphic text in an incised calligraphic style similar to that of the celebrated Tablet of the 96 Glyphs (see foldouts at end of volume). In 2001, a very similar carving was unearthed in nearby Temple XXI, and the two monuments were, as we shall see, likely dedicated on the same date.

No other Maya monument can be easily compared to the platforms of Temples XIX and XXI. Their sculptured faces are small, no more than fifty centimeters high, and they were set at floor level as the vertical sides of the rectangular platform. The east and north sides of the Temple XIX platform are uncarved, probably because of their proximity to the end wall of the gallery. The platform no doubt served as some type of supporting surface, but beyond this no obvious function comes to mind. We can probably discount its role as a "throne," or at least distinguish the platform from other types of benches and thrones that are customarily placed in a central line against the back wall of a structure. As the discussion will show, the inscription may provide some important clues about the purpose of this odd monument.

The condition of the sculpted panels is nearly pristine, the only damage resulting from hairline fractures and some loss of detail in a single glyph column on the west side. Upon excavation, remains of red pigment were easily discernible in areas on the south face. A stucco layer was apparently applied to the temple floor at some time after the dedication of the platform and lipped up against the base of the carving, obscuring many glyphs in the bottom rows. The removal of the stucco revealed more well-preserved glyphs, including several near the end of the main south text that look to have been incised in a quick and slipshod manner. They stand in great contrast to the beautifully detailed carving of most other glyphs. Perhaps the difference is due to the position of these glyphs at floor level; if the sculptor worked *in situ*, these would have been quite difficult to carve.

The longer south face of the platform can be considered the front of the monument, and it is clearly the more important of the two sculpted panels. A beautiful scene in low relief shows seven seated or kneeling individuals, the central one named as the enthroned Palenque ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. The remaining six men appear to be high-ranking court attendants

Detail of glyphs from the Temple XIX platform, south face.

participating (as the text will make clear) in a ceremonial headband "crowning" of the king on the day of his accession, or 9.14.10.4.2 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab. The portraits of both sides are all highly individualized and must rank among the finest figural carvings of all Maya art. Each figure has a glyphic caption varying in length from two to five glyph blocks (the names and identities of all the attendants are discussed in Chapter 4).

The inscription of the principal southern panel is divided into two flanking sections of fifty-six glyphs each, giving a total of 112 glyphs. The west side of the platform is significantly shorter than the south face but holds to a similar design overall. Three figures sit in somewhat less formal poses, and the focus is again on a seated man in the center, who holds a large bundle of coiled rope—a unique image in Maya art. Glyph panels on each side contain thirty-two glyphs, providing a total of sixty-four in all. Together the main texts of the two side panels of the platform hold 176 glyphs, making for one of the longer inscriptions at Palenque.

Each of the two side panels is a self-contained composition. Their respective hieroglyphic texts are not continuous, and the scenes and inscriptions are thematically distinct in many ways. For this reason I will discuss them in separate sections below, beginning with the longer south side and then moving on to a discussion of the west side panel. For the sake of clarity, my text analysis will follow the natural divisions of the inscription into "passages" or "episodes." Here, a "passage" refers to the basic subdivision of a narrative that is anchored to a specific day, and includes at the very least some predicate or verbal statement (Date-Verb). Typically a Distance Number, or time interval, connects the individual passages, which in the ensuing discussion will be consecutively numbered and prefixed by "S" (south) or "W" (west) to mark the side of the platform to which they belong (Passage S-1, S-2, etc.). In essence, passages are akin to what some epigraphers have called "clauses" (Kubler 1973; Mathews 1977). More recently Josserand (1991, 1997) has conducted more refined studies of these essential building blocks of Classic Maya discourse—what she calls "episodes"—analyzing them for hierarchies and juxtapositions of information. Due to the unusual length of the document, the Temple XIX bench inscription provides a fine case study for looking further into the structures of narrative discourse in Classic Maya texts.

The discussions of each passage begin with a summary paragraph of the contents, followed by more specific commentaries on individual glyphs and issues of interpretation.

I. The South Panel

Passage S-1 (Figure 34)

Summary: The inscription commences on the panel's west side, with the Initial Series 12.10.1.13.2 9 Ik' 5 Mol, corresponding to March 10, 3309 B.C. Supplementary information for the date includes the moon age record and a reference to the current station in the 819-day circuit, positioned in the east. The opening date is given as the inauguration date of a familiar mythical figure from Palenque known as GI. His accession was overseen or managed by the noted Maya deity Itzamnaaj.

The opening Long Count date presents no ambiguities, with the clear record at B1-B3 of 12.10.1.13.2. The corresponding day and month are 9 Ik' 5 Mol, with the day position at A4 and the month further along in the text at block D4, after a lengthy supplementary series. The date 12.10.1.13.2 9 Ik' 5 Mol is "pre-era," falling nearly ten K'atuns (approximating two centuries) before the conventional starting point of the Long Count on 13.0.0.0.0 4 Ajaw 8

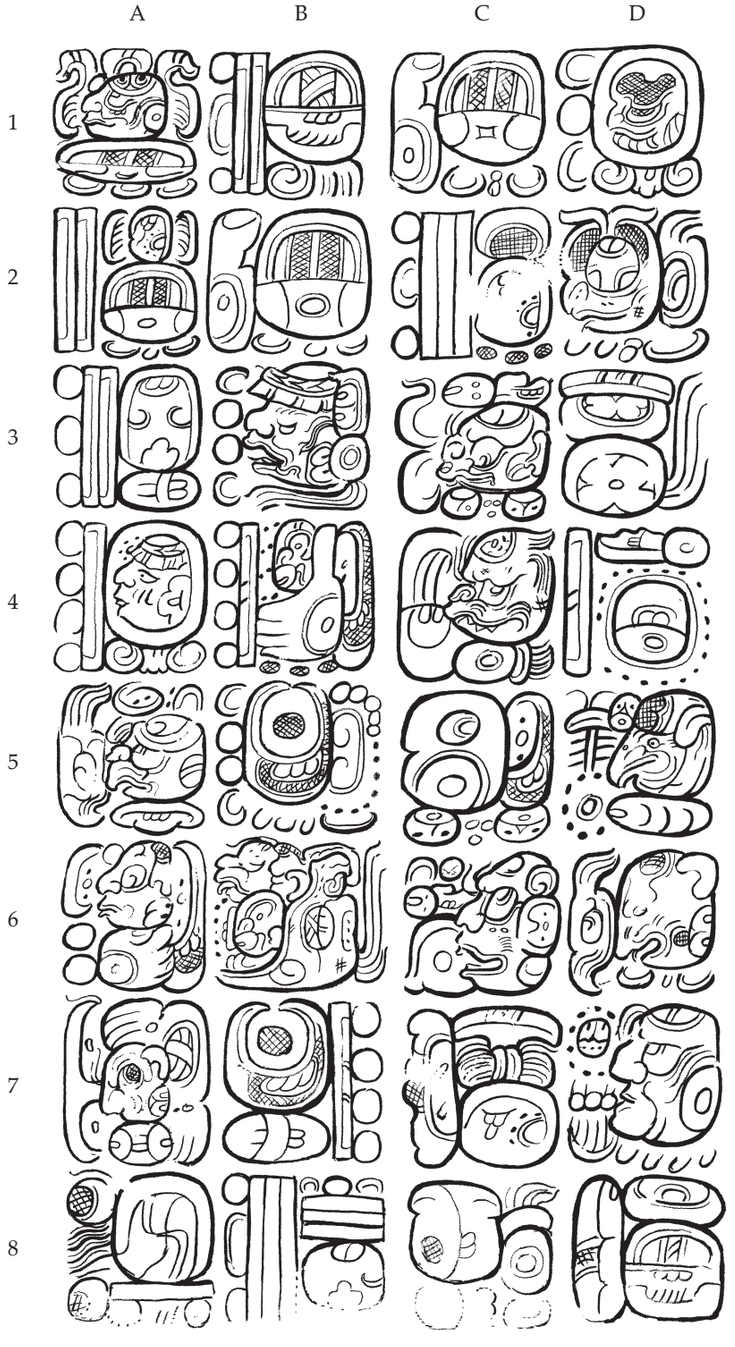


Figure 34. Temple XIX platform, Passage S-1.

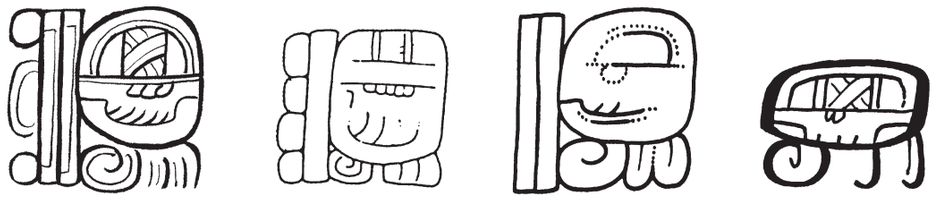


Figure 35. An unusual variant of the Bak'tun period: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) Lacanha, Panel 1, (c) Naranjo, Stela 1, E9 (re-drawn by David Stuart from Graham and Von Euw 1975:12), (d) Dresden Codex, p. 61, B4.

Kumk'u, or August 13, 3114 B.C. if we use the Goodman-Martinez-Thompson correlation with a 584285 constant. In our own system the date falls on March 10, 3309 B.C. and places the opening of the narrative squarely within mythical time. The beginning of this text recalls the similarly distant Initial Series on the three tablets of the Cross Group, yet the Temple XIX date is significantly earlier than any of them. As Davoust (2001) has noted, this opening date also corresponds to the appearance of Venus as Evening Star and seems the first of several Venus associations found in the inscription.

A few graphical aspects of the Initial Series are worth noting. The Introducing Glyph presents the "*ak'bal*" patron sign for Mol, here a somewhat unusual profile variant representing the night sun deity.[14] In other contexts this sign is simply read **AK'AB**, "night, darkness." The Long Count periods all appear in their standard forms, with the conspicuous exception of the Bak'tun at B1. This is a very rare variant composed of a "sky" or **CHAN** sign and a subfix whose reading remains uncertain. Only a few other examples of this odd Bak'tun glyph are known, and to my knowledge they have never been discussed in published treatments of the Long Count calendar and its notation. Two examples are attested from Lacanha and Naranjo, and others from the Dresden Codex (Figure 35b-d). I have no decipherment to offer for this odd glyph, but it is interesting that the Palenque, Naranjo, and Dresden examples all appear in records of extensive time periods reaching back before the current "era" event. The Lacanha case is the obvious exception, being used in a more standard way to record the historical Period Ending 9.15.15.0.0 (see Coe and Benson 1966).

The K'atun and Tun glyphs are perfectly regular in form, yet each carries the subfixed sign -**ya** (T126 in Thompson's [1962] catalog). This sign is customarily used on period glyphs when they help to express Distance Numbers, but it is highly unusual to find -**ya** as a suffix in a Long Count notation such as this. In Distance Numbers, -**ya** likely serves to represent the temporal ending *-iiy*, marking "time ago," which is related to the completive aspect marker on root and derived intransitive verbs in Classic Mayan grammar. I suspect that its presence here is to indicate *hun haab-iiy*, "one year (past)," and that its use here is due to the date being very early. It is difficult to confirm this speculation, however, since the **-ya** subfix does not appear on the other Long Count periods used to write early dates, such as those in the Cross

[14] The iconography of this "night sun deity" shows an essential similarity to the standard K'inich Ajaw sun god, the only difference being the use of "*ak'bal*" signs in place of the *k'in*, "sun," elements that regularly decorate the solar god's forehead, arms, and legs. This "dark" sun god, if we can call him that, should not be confused with the "jaguar god of the underworld," who has his own diagnostic features including, at times, the *ak'bal* symbol. I suspect the jaguar deity was specifically a nocturnal fire god with close conceptual ties to the night sun (D. Stuart 1998).

Group tablets, for instance.

The supplementary series following the 9 Ik' day glyph consists of three parts: (1) Glyphs G and F (B4 and A5), which set the day in a nine-day ritual cycle related probably to the Aztec "Nine Lords of the Night," (2) the moon age, recorded in glyphs D, C, X, B, and A (B5-B7, respectively), and (3) a parenthetical reckoning back to the nearest station for the 819-day cycle and a record of the "standing" of a God K or K'awil figure at one of the four cardinal directions (at A8-D3). These records in this particular order are standard fare for lengthy Palenque texts, anchoring the recorded date within several important ritual and astronomical cycles.

The Long Count in question calls for Glyph G1, which is easily recognizable at B4, although in a somewhat unusual form. (Here "Glyph G1" should not be confused with the deity "GI" to be discussed later at some length.) The "9" prefix and the God C head (**K'UH**) within the hand are standard for Glyph G1, but the -**ja** postfix is not seen in any other example. Its presence must point to a verbal interpretation of the hand sign, which we know in other examples is the word **K'AM** or **CH'AM**, "to take, receive something" (the -**ma** sign beneath the hand provides further evidence for this reading). I consider the **K'UH** head to be the direct object of the "taking" action. Considered as a whole, Glyph G1 might now be readable as **9-K'AM-ma-ja-K'UH**, *Bolon K'a(h)m-aj K'uh*, "Nine (or Many) Times are the Gods Taken." I offer this as a tentative solution, but it may prove important for the eventual decipherments of other Glyphs G, which up to now have been very obscure.

The form of Glyph F, following at A5, assumes the fairly standard spelling **U-TI'-HUUN-na**. The reading of the uppermost element as **TI'** for *ti'*, "mouth, lips, edge," comes from a recent proposal (D. Stuart 1998c), and I believe it has much to recommend it, despite having an unclear role in Glyph F itself. The statement *u-ti' huun* is attested in the dictionaries as "margin of a page," which is somewhat difficult to explain in this context. I am, however, reminded how the Central Mexican glyphs for the Nine Lords of the Night—corresponding to the nine Glyphs G of the Maya—are regularly painted along the page margins of manuscripts in the Mixteca-Puebla style. Glyphs G1 and F might be taken as a proper name for a god or ritual followed by a possessive construction orienting that name to a "book" or "page" (*huun*): *Bolon K'ahm-aj K'uh u-ti' huun*, "'Nine (or Many) Times are the Gods Taken' is the page's margin." Admittedly this sounds very obscure, but it is an altogether possible reading. Be that as it may, the use of the ergative pronoun *u-* as a prefix on Glyph F is somewhat unusual for Palenque scribes, as is the "jester god" **HUUN** head variant.

The moon age for the day is recorded in Glyph D as twenty-two days, at position B5. The numerical statement itself is unremarkable, but the remaining sign of the glyph block is certainly unusual. In the records of moon ages, the elapsed number of days ranging from one to twenty-eight must always precede a verbal statement marking the "arrival" of the lunar month, or the starting point of the count. In the vast majority of cases the verb is *hul*, "arrive," as deciphered by Barbara MacLeod (1990) some years ago. This verb is always written in "past" form as *hul-iiy*, with the -**ya** sign suffix following what MacLeod and others, including myself, have taken to be the syllabic combination **hu-li**. Prior to the discovery of the Temple XIX inscription, I had considered that the **hu-** sign in fact originated as a representation of a human footprint and noted a few Early Classic examples where the footprint appeared without the -**li**. This suggested that the footprint—the symbol of travel *par excellence* in Mesoamerican art—served not as **hu** but as the logogram **HUL**. The Palenque example confirms this interpretation, for it too has a very clear footprint sign followed by -**ya**, spelling *hul-iiy*,



Figure 36. Logographic forms of **HUL**, "to arrive," as a footprint: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) Bejucal, Stela 1 (inked from a field drawing by Ian Graham), (c) El Zapote, Stela 1 (inked from a field drawing by Ian Graham).

"it arrived" (Figure 36a). There are clear parallels to this in early examples of Glyph D (Figure 36b and c). Taken together with the number, we have **22-ji-HUL-ya**, for "two-and-twenty days ago it arrived." The subject of this verb, as we have known since MacLeod's work, is the number of the lunar month, given as Glyph 2C in the subsequent block, A6. The variable head atop the outstretched hand in Glyph 2C is the jaguar god, which is in keeping with the numerical coefficient of two (Schele, Grube and Fahsen 1992).

Glyph X of the supplementary series, at B6, generally functions as a proper name for the moon or some aspect of it, changing during the course of its phases or according to its position in the sky. This was called the moon's *ch'ok k'aba'*, or "emergent name," which is the probable reading of Glyph B in the following block.[15] Here the Glyph X name variant shows a crocodile's head with its mouth agape, out of which emerges a jaguar that in turn belches forth the head of God C. No reading is possible for this moon or lunation name, but the ending **-ni** is important here, suggesting *ahin*, "crocodile," as the final element of the glyph **(?-?-AHIN-ni**).[16] Glyph B comes next at A7, read **U-ch'o-ko-K'ABA'**, *u-ch'ok-k'aba'*, "(it is) its youth name," and then B7 holds Glyph 9A, the numerical grouping specifying a lunation of twenty-nine days' duration.

So ends the supplementary lunar data. The subsequent eight blocks give us a parenthetical passage stating the position of 12.10.1.13.2 relative to the ritual cycle of 819 days. Numerous other inscriptions at Palenque follow this same general structure, and 819-day count records are highly consistent in their internal phrasing. Here, at A8-C1, we encounter a Distance Number of 1.16.17 reckoning back to the 819-day station 1 Chikchan 18 Ch'en, or 12.9.19.14.5, recorded as a Calendar round at D1 and D2 (the month coefficient is carved as 17, but clearly 18 Ch'en was intended). The accompanying explanatory statement consists of only three glyphs and features the customary verb possibly read *wa'*, "to stand upright,"

[15] The translation of the common word *ch'ok* as "emergent" was suggested by Josserand (1999) and seems more correct than simply "young" or "youth." In this context, *u-ch'ok k'aba'*, "its emergent name," probably refers to some aspect of the moon during its progressive change over the course of the lunation.

[16] The word *ahin* is best translated as "crocodile," although at times I and others have referred to it mistakenly as an alligator (see, for example, D. Stuart 2003b). Karen Bassie-Sweet (personal communication 2003) clarified the important distinctions between these animals for me and noted that images of crocodilians in Maya art and writing probably are *Crocodylus morleti*, or Morlet's crocodile, the species most commonly found in the lakes and rivers of the Maya lowlands (Schlesinger 2001:233-235). The **AHIN** value for the crocodile glyph is strongly indicated by a syllabic substitution in the name of a woman, *Ix Yok Ahin*, "Lady Crocodile's Foot." On one polychrome vessel (Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993:Plate 40) the name is spelled **IX (Y)OK-ki AHIN-na**. On a companion vessel now in the Museo Popol Vuh in Guatemala, the very same name is written as **IX-(Y)OK a-hi**. The alternate use of the -**ni** and -**na** suffixes may well indicate different vowel lengths in the term for "crocodile"—*ahin* at Palenque but *ahiin* on the vessel probably from Peten.

here given as **WA'?-ji-ji-ya**, for *wah-(a)j-iiy*, "it was stood-up" (the redundant **ji** elements are different signs, and I take them to be a scribal idiosyncrasy).[17] The subject of the verb, at C3, is the name of K'awil, or God K, but in this context his name is almost always with the vegetal "maize" superfix. Lastly the glyph for *elk'in*, "east" (**EL-K'IN-ni**) specifies the eastern world quadrant as K'awil's station.[18] The entire parenthetical record of the 819-day count states that "1.16.17 ago, K'awil was stood up(?) in the east."

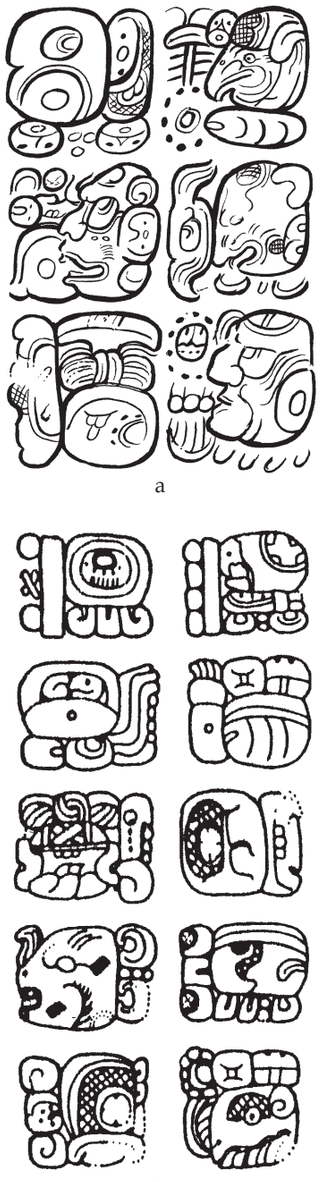
The conventional arrangement of a Long Count date calls for the month glyph to follow its Supplementary Series. In some texts this can simply be Glyphs G and F, but more often, as here, the moon age is given and sometimes the 819-day count record as well. In this way one might think of the two Calendar Round components as "brackets" around the supplementary data, emphasizing the parenthetical nature of the information within the larger discursive structure of the text. In this particular inscription the scribe has chosen to do something a bit unusual: he has placed the expected "5 Mol" month glyph at D4, following the odd insertion of **I-u-ti**, or *i-uht-ø*, "then it happens." This is unexpected, but perhaps it reveals the true internal structure of these complex opening dates. Since the supplementary series we have seen contains two Distance Numbers linking earlier dates to the featured Long Count, the use of *i-uht-ø* here is an explicit means of returning the reader to the featured time, "5 Mol." If we offer a quickly sketched paraphrase, it might read "12.10.1.13.2 9 Ik'; it was twenty-two days ago that the second moon entered...; it was 1.16.17 ago that K'awil was stood up in the east, and then (9 Ik') 5 Mol comes to pass."

Now, after this look at the opening date, let us turn to the actual event phrase connected with this early mythical time. The verb phrase opens at C5 with **CHUM-la-ja**, or *chum-(u)l-aj-ø*, "he is seated." The prepositional phrase in the following block is **TA-AJAW-le**, *ta ajaw-le(l)*, "in the rulership," providing the second part of a basic and ubiquitous statement for royal accession. The protagonist or subject of the verb is named in the very next block and is recognizable as the god GI, the initial member of the Palenque Triad of patron gods, who was first pointed out by Berlin (1963) and also discussed by Kelley (1965) and Schele (1976). Here his name glyph is in its "full" form, with the addition of three poorly understood signs before his portrait face. We can be certain, therefore, that the opening passage of the inscription commemorates the "seating into office" of this deity.

The remaining five glyphs of Passage S-1, up to the bottom of column D, provide important

[17] The **WA'** value for the verb's main sign may be less obvious than previously thought, and another reading is worth considering. The sign displays a consistent similarity to the animal read as **OK**, "leg, foot," especially in early examples, but is distinctive in having a "split chuwen" element within its eye. This infix we know from other contexts as **se** or **cha** (a visual distinction between the two is uncertain). Of these, the **se** value is intriguing, for this might give us **OK-se**, or *ok-es*, "to put in something." In Yucatecan this is a transitive stem and the causative derivation from the root *ok*, "enter." However, we know *och* (glyphic **OCH** or **o-chi**) to be the Classic Mayan cognate of "enter," with *och-es* attested as the causative form in Ch'olti' and other Greater Tzeltalan languages. Although a reading of this verb glyph as *ok-es-(a)j-iiy*, "it was put in," is attractive semantically since the event seems to refer to the positioning of a K'awil figure in one of the four cardinal directions, this could only be considered if we were to accept an irregular phonological process whereby Classic Mayan *och* and its derivation *ok-es* coexist.

[18] Stephen Houston (personal communication 1993) first posited the **EL** value for the "*k'in* bowl" sign, corresponding to the verb root *el*, "go out, emerge." The Classic term for "east," *elk'in*, carries the descriptive meaning "emerges-sun" and is contrastive with *ochk'in*, "west" or "enters-sun" (**OCH-K'IN**). In the later codices we find the better-known Yucatecan terms *lak'in* and *chik'in*, spelled with the hieroglyphs **la-K'IN** and **chi-K'IN**. As Nicholas Hopkins and Terrence Kaufman note (cited in Bassie-Sweet 1996:195), these words are corrupted forms derived from **elab-k'in* and **ochi-k'in*.



a

b

Figure 37. Examples of accession events supervised by overlords: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) unprovenanced panel from the Cancuen region (drawing by Sarah Jackson).

contextual information concerning GI's accession to office. The glyph at D6 is the common **U-KAB-ji-ya** expression that has been recognized by several epigraphers as a "secondary verb," a special type of transitive construction that employs a deictic suffix to refer to a previously specified direct object. Here the sense is likely to be "he oversees it," which I believe related to the derived transitive root in Tzotzil *chabi*, "to govern, oversee, tend to" (Laughlin 1988). Syntactically, the subject of this secondary verb cannot be GI, but rather must be another personage who should be named in the subsequent glyphs. This personage is the important Maya deity Itzamnaaj (or God D), whose portrait name is in the second of the two blocks at C7 and D7. The full name is unusual: **YAX-NAAH-hi ITZAMNAAJ-ji**, for *Yax Naah Itzamnaaj*, perhaps "First Itzamnaaj" or "First House Itzamnaaj."[19]

Combinations of the "seating" verb with the secondary "overseeing" statement are found in other Maya inscriptions, but we know them only from purely historical contexts (Figure 37). One general parallel appears on a panel from the Cancuen region (Figure 37b), where after the verb phrase *chum-wan-ø ti-ajaw-le(l)* we find the name of the local Cancuen ruler. The *u-kab-j-iiy* glyph comes next, followed by the name of another lord, in this instance the contemporary ruler of Calakmul. From other uses of the *u-kab-j-iiy* phrase, we can surmise that it designates a hierarchical relationship between two rulers. In this case at Cancuen the Calakmul lord is "overseeing" or somehow is responsible for the seating of the local Cancuen ruler. The recent work by Martin and Grube (1995) outlining Calakmul's political power structures during its rivalry with Tikal is based in large part on such evidence (see also D. Stuart 1995).

The location for the inauguration event is presented in the final two glyphs of columns C and D, where we find the completive verb *ut-iiy* (**u-ti-ya**), "it came to pass," followed by a place name. This short closing phrase parallels a great many others at Palenque and other

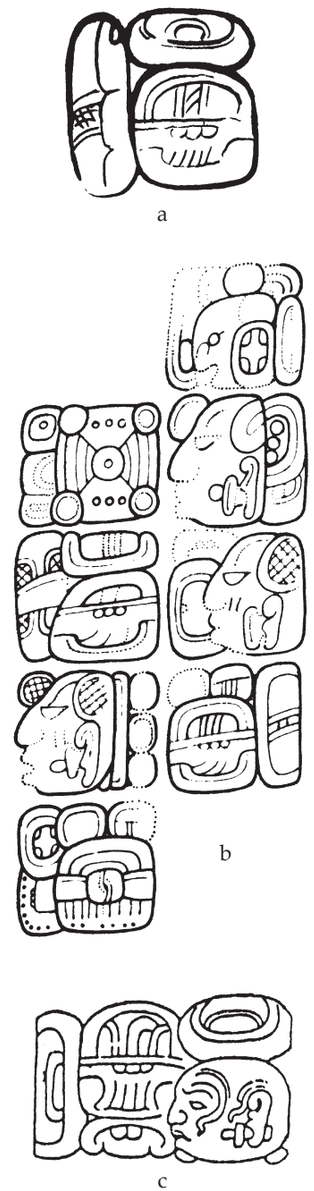
[19] The latter may seem an odd epithet, but it is worth noting that on the Hieroglyphic Stairway at Copan, on Step 31, we find the record of a mythic house dedication event involving Itzamnaaj, where the initial phrase is *u-naah-tal el-naah y-otot u-mam…*, "(it is) the first censing, (in) the house of his grandfather…" The name of Itzamnaaj follows in the next stairway block. I see this passage of the stairway text as part of a "creation" narrative, perhaps specifying a temple dedication of Itzamnaaj's "first house" in the very distant past.

sites where they are often used to specify the locale of a particular ritual event. Here, the location is given at D8 with **TA-?-CHAN**, "at the ..?.. sky," where the unknown sign is the so-called "mirror" prefix found with some deity names. I am not certain how this combination of the "mirror" and "sky" serves to indicate a location, but I believe it is still some general reference for "heaven." The same combination of the mirror and **CHAN** occurs in a few other Maya texts, including Stela 24 at Naranjo, where it refers to the place of the moon goddess who is impersonated by the Lady of Dos Pilas (Figure 38b). The glyph is also sometimes in a couplet structure with **KAB**, "earth" (Figure 38c).[20] In the Palenque text, I believe that the general sense is that the accession of GI took place "in the heavens."

From what we read in the Palenque text, there can be little doubt of the interpretation that the inauguration of GI was "overseen" or in some manner "done by" Itzamnaaj, arguably the supreme deity of Classic Maya religion. The opening event of the platform's narrative is therefore one of epic and cosmological significance. It immediately raises numerous questions about Palenque and Maya mythology, not the least of which is: how can GI assume the throne many centuries before his "birth," also on the day 9 Ik', identified long ago by Kelley (1965) in the inscriptions of the Temple of the Cross? The day

[20] The "mirror" prefix and its head variant has proved difficult to decipher, despite several proposals. Grube and Schele (1991) read the sign as **TZUK**, "partition." This value is highly doubtful, however, for it rests on a visual confusion between the mirror head variant and an animated form of the syllable **tzu** used in some spellings of **tzu-ku**.

I have considered that a more supportable reading could be discerned from this sign's frequent use as a prefix to **BAAH** or **ba-hi**, apparently in spelling a term connected to "image." On Copan Stela 4, for example, **U-?-BAAH-hi-li** would seem to refer to the monument or "image" (Houston and Stuart 1996). The otherwise-attested term *winbah*, "mask, image," has suggested **WIN** as a possible reading, but this cannot be confirmed. Alternatively, I have considered that the combination of this mirror element with **CHAN** might relate to the Tzeltalan term for "sky," *sat chan*, literally "face-sky." The term for "face" is highly complex among Mayan languages (Kaufman and Norman 1984:120), and in proto-Ch'olan it was **(h)ut*, with the meanings "face, eye, fruit" (the distinct Mayan terms for face—*sat*, *hut* or *wut*, and *ich*—all share these meanings). Interestingly, on the vase K1226 we find hanging fruits on a tree depicted as the "mirror," strengthening the connection to *sat chan* or, perhaps in Ch'olan, a no-longer-attested term **wut chan*, "face-sky."



a

b

c

Figure 38. The "Mirror-Sky" glyph: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) Naranjo, Stela 24, D5 (from Graham and Von Euw 1975), (c) Copan, Stela A, left side (drawing by Linda Schele).

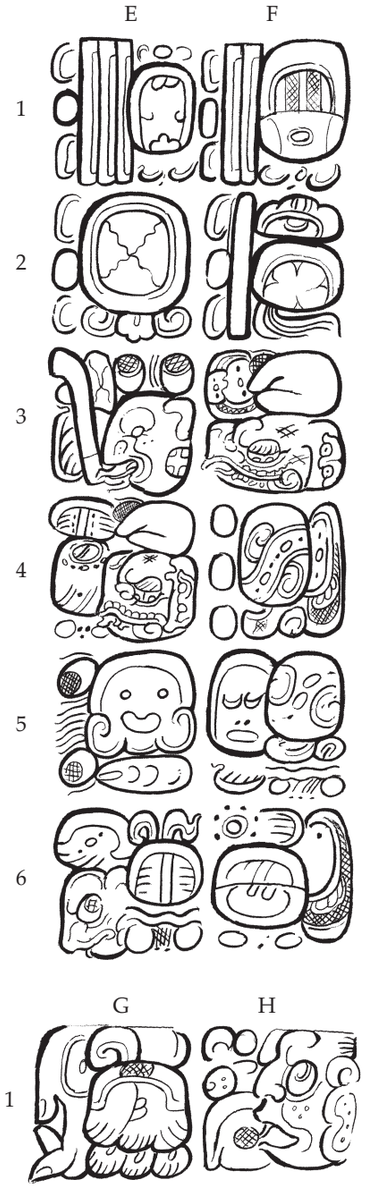


Figure 39. Temple XIX platform, Passage S-2.

9 Ik', equivalent to Nine Wind in central Mexican sources, will prove to be of paramount importance in this inscription and is cited a total of four times in the inscription of the south panel. The implications of these references, including possible connections to other Mesoamerican mythologies, will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Passage S-2 (Figure 39)

Summary: On the day 12.10.12.14.18 1 Etz'nab 6 Yaxk'in, a "Starry Deer Crocodile" (or possibly two aspects of that cosmic entity) is (or are) decapitated, perhaps at the hands of GI. Several glyphs are difficult to decipher, but we find a reference to some deity as a "fire-driller." The passage closes with a reference to the forming or construction of some object associated with GI. The theme seems to be world creation.

Passage S-2 presents considerable difficulties for decipherment. Numerous glyphs are unique or employ vaguely understood signs, and the internal structure of the passage is complex, with at least three verbs placed among its ten constituent glyph blocks. Nevertheless, enough is discernible to know that this portion describes some event of great cosmological importance coming eleven years after the inauguration of GI.

The passage opens at E1 and F1 with a Distance Number of 11.1.16, which when added to the Initial Series reaches 12.10.12.14.18 1 Etz'nab 6 Yaxk'in, written as the Calendar Round at E2 and F2. We will soon find that the mythological event recorded in this passage is a ritual decapitation, which raises the strong likelihood that its association with the day 1 Etz'nab ("1 Flint" in the central Mexican calendar) is not fortuitous.

The opening verb phrase at E3 is **CH'AK-ka-U-BAAH**, a reading that follows in part Orejel's (1990) important decipherment of the "axe/comb" combination as *ch'ak*, "to cut, chop something." The axe sign alone is the logogram **CH'AK**, with the **-ka** or "comb" element serving as a phonetic complement (**CH'AK-ka**). *Ch'ak* is a transitive verb root in proto-Ch'olan with a specific meaning of "to injure someone/something" (Kaufman and Norman 1984). In other well known cases the same axe verb precedes toponymic glyphs as records of warfare and conquest, as in the statement *ch'ahk-aj Lakamha'*, "Lakamha' (Palenque)

was conquered" (Schele 1982:109; D. Stuart 1998b).[21] The phrasing on the Temple XIX platform is different and somewhat more complex, however. After the **CH'AK-ka** sequence, the remaining two signs in E3 are **U-BAAH**, spelling the possessed noun *u-baah*, "his/her/its self/body/head" (D. Stuart 1996; Houston and Stuart 1998). Given its position after the transitive root, *u-baah* is likely a direct object of the action, and confirmation comes from the appearance of this same "chops-self" combination in the name of a nightmarish *way* or "*nagual*" entity depicted on a number of polychrome vases (Grube and Nahm 1994:708; Houston and Stuart 1998) (Figure 40). The Palenque event can be similarly interpreted as a reflexive construction, but given the complex range of meanings of *baah*, including "body, person," a more accessible meaning of "chops the head" seems equally plausible.



Figure 40. The self-decapitating *way* figure named *Ch'ak Ubaah Akan* (detail of a rollout photograph by Otis Imboden, from George Stuart 1975:774).

In the Palenque text the full construction **CH'AK-ka-U-BAAH** is probably a somewhat truncated spelling of a passive construction, since no agent is specified nearby (an active voice would necessitate the construction *u-ch'ak-aw*, "he chops it"). Passives are derived from transitive roots by the insertion of post-vocalic *-h-* into the CVC root and the addition of the suffix *-aj* to the derived stem (CVC > CV*h*C-*aj*) (Lacadena 1997). Usually the *-aj* suffix is spelled by the affixation of the **-ja** sign, but here it is not present. I nevertheless believe a passive construction is likely, given the common alternation of the spellings **CH'AK-ka** and **CH'AK-ka-ja** in several other inscriptions (numerous examples appear at Naranjo). **CH'AK-ka** may simply be an idiosyncratic spelling of a passive, following a long-lasting scribal convention. The complete verb is thus perhaps *ch'ahk-aj u-baah*, "its head was chopped off."

Following the conventions of Mayan syntax, the referent of the possessive pronoun—the head's "owner," as it were—would logically follow directly after the object. The glyphs at F3 and E4 clearly operate as a pair, perhaps referring to two separate entities or, alternatively, to a single character through a

[21] In K'iche, *ch'ak* is a root meaning "conquer, defeat" (Edmonson 1965), and I believe this was a semantic extension from "chop, cut" in Classic Mayan as well.

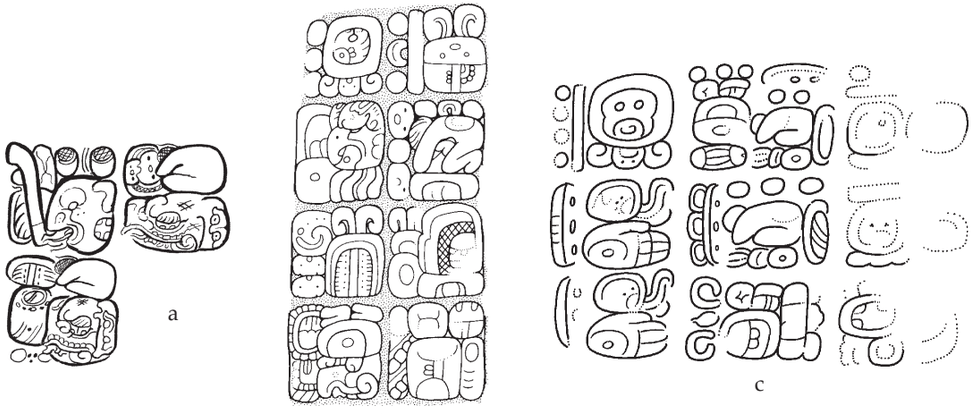


Figure 41. Examples of the "back" sign: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) Tonina, M.159, A1-B4 (drawing by Lucia Henderson), (c) Caracol, Stela 6, D7-F9.

descriptive couplet. Both glyphs share two distinctive and unusual signs: a representation of a "hunched" and seemingly headless human body and, below, a head of the creature I call the "Starry Deer Crocodile," who seems a distinctive yet poorly understood aspect of the "Celestial Monster" or "Cosmic Serpent," originally identified and discussed by Spinden (1913). Before these shared elements in F3 and E4 are different prefixes, surely operating as modifiers to the noun base. In F3 the prefix is the "hole" or "well" sign that is best known as the initial element of the Wayeb month glyph. The following glyph has a more complex modifier spelled with the three signs **tz'i-ba-la**, for *tz'ib-al*, probably a participial derivation from the verb *tz'ib*, "to paint, write," with the more specific sense of "painted, written."

The hunched body signs that precede the crocodile heads are otherwise rare elements, but there is some circumstantial evidence that they are to be read as logographs for **PAAT**, "back." The image of the sign is certainly suggestive enough, but both phonetic and iconographic evidence can be cited as at least circumstantial support. The most common setting for the same "back" sign is as a suffix to numbers in what would seem to be ordinal constructions ("first, second, third," etc.) before verbs. As seen in Figure 41, the glyphs are written either **U-**Number-"Back"**-li** or **U-**Number-"Back"**-ti-li**, strongly suggesting that the value of the "back" sign ends in *-t*. Perhaps significantly, established spellings of the word for *paat*, "back," are **pa-ti**. In two inscriptions from Dos Pilas and Aguateca we find a war event phrase beginning with **CH'AK-ka** (*ch'ahk-aj*) and followed by the curious sequence **U-tz'i-ba-li pa-ti-K'AWIL** (Figure 42). The sentence is difficult to translate, yet the combination of the *ch'ahk-aj* verb with a direct object that includes the words *tz'ib* and *paat* offers an interesting parallel to the Palenque text.

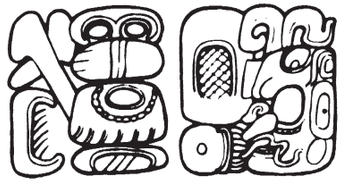


Figure 42. An "axe" event recorded at Dos Pilas: Stela 16, D2-C4 (from Graham 1967:Fig 7).

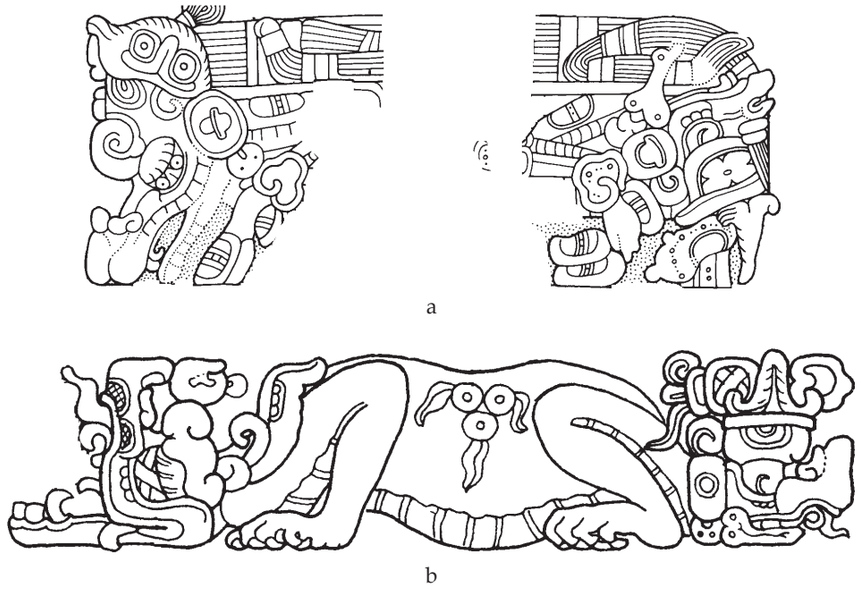


Figure 43. The two varieties of "cosmic crocodiles": (a) Piedras Negras, Stela 25 (from Proskouriakoff 1993:48), (b) Copan, Altar D' (CPN 82) (from Schele and Miller 1986:45).

The crocodile heads at F3 and E4 each display the long-lashed "star" eye and the long deer ear, also decorated by a "star," that readily identify it as the Starry Deer Crocodile. The stars of the eye and ear distinguish it from another crocodile or caiman head often found in Maya inscriptions, which has a "crossed-bands" decoration in the eye (Figure 43b). A good example of this was seen in Passage S-1, used as part of Glyph X in the Lunar Series. Significantly, the Starry Deer Crocodile serves as the head variant of the day sign Lamat and also in the month patron for Yax, which in their standard forms are simply the "star," probably read **EK'**, "star, planet" (Figure 44). In the Palenque inscription, however, the unusual context makes it difficult to know if **EK'** is the intended value of this particular crocodile glyph.

As mentioned, the Starry Deer Crocodile is a variation or aspect of the "Celestial Monster" entity discussed by many scholars over recent years (among them Milbrath 1999; D. Stuart 1984, 1988; Schele and Miller 1986; Taube 1988, 1989). As an iconographic image the Starry Deer Crocodile, like its close relative, is often seen arching over some space or scene as



Figure 44. The Starry Deer Crocodile as the personification of a star: (a) the day sign Lamat, from the Hieroglyphic Stairway at Copan, (b) patron of the month Yax, from Tikal Stela 31, (c) Quirigua Stela K (drawings by Lucia Henderson).

a symbol of the sky (Figure 45). All have the general head and body markings of a crocodile, but also display deer hooves, the familiar deer ear, and sometimes also an antler on the forehead (Taube 1988). The so-called "niche" stelae of Piedras Negras, depicting the newly inaugurated kings of that site, portray the Starry Deer Crocodile in their lower registers, where they clearly have some celestial significance in structural opposition to "water" and "earth" bands below (Figure 43a, Figure 45b). Other notable images of the Starry Deer Crocodile include portraits on the "Cosmic Plate" in the codex style (Figure 45a) and of course the inner sculpted doorway of Temple 22 at Copan.

I believe that the Starry Deer Crocodile is more than an animated sky symbol. The iconography consistently associated with the creature strongly indicates that it represents the starry, nocturnal aspect of the more broadly conceived Celestial Monster, and that it in essence symbolizes the cloudy Milky Way (D. Stuart 1984; Milbrath 1999). This is best exemplified by the image within the sacred mountain of Copan's Temple 22, where the body of the creature is composed of seven S-shaped scrolls that are the representations of clouds in Maya

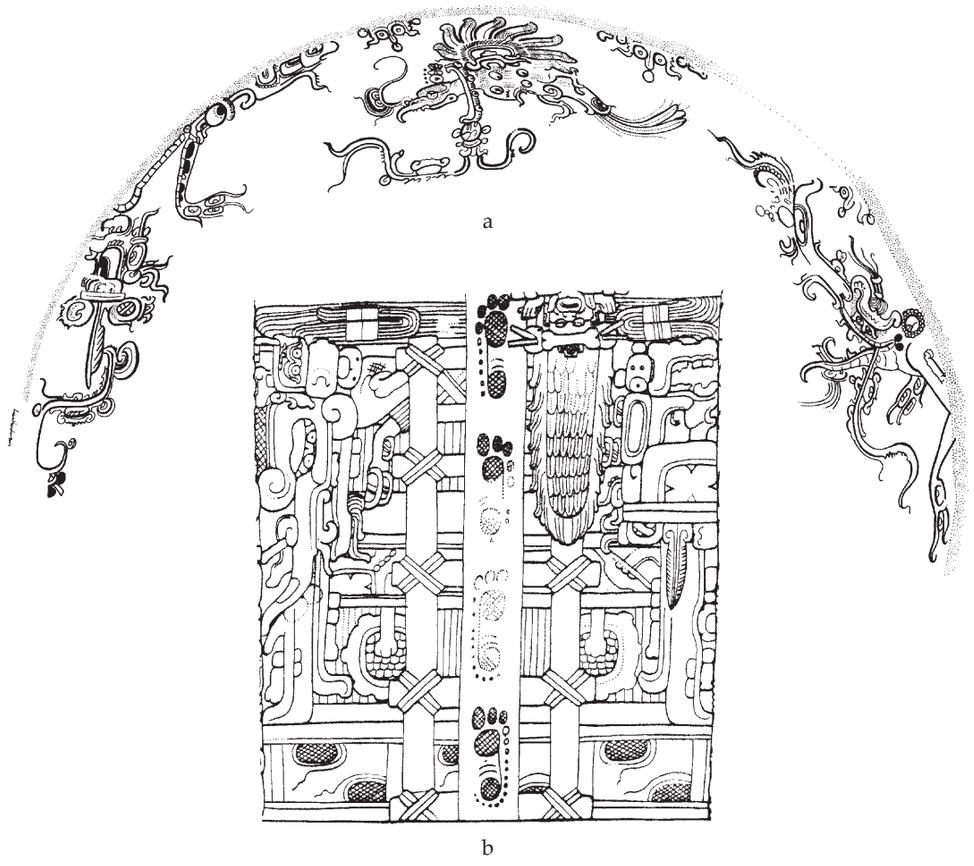


Figure 45. The Starry Deer Crocodile as celestial image: (a) the "Cosmic Plate" (drawing by Lucia Henderson after Schele and Miller 1986:315, Pl. 122), (b) Piedras Negras, Stela 6 (drawing by David Stuart from Stuart and Graham 2003:36).

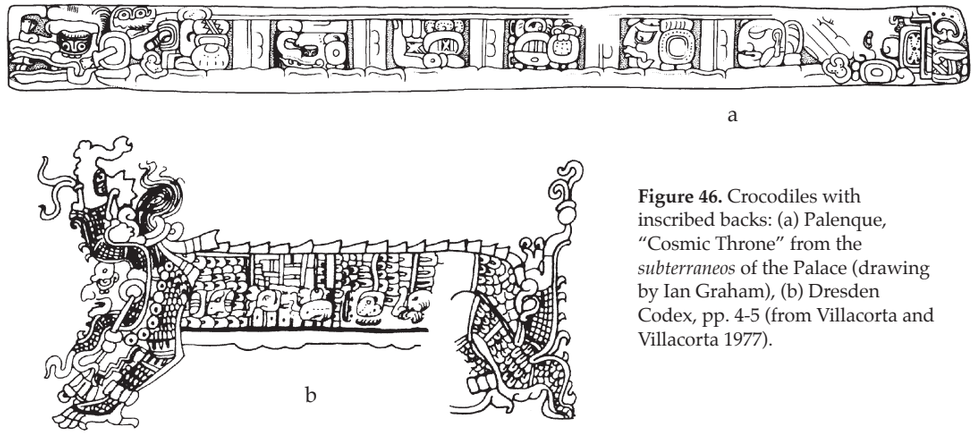


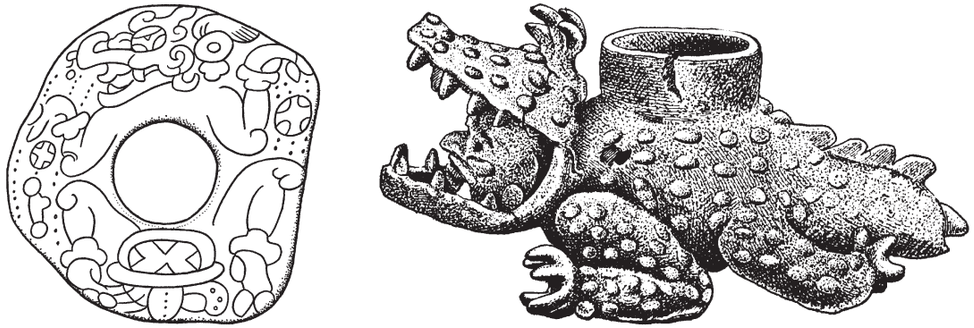
Figure 46. Crocodiles with inscribed backs: (a) Palenque, "Cosmic Throne" from the *subterraneos* of the Palace (drawing by Ian Graham), (b) Dresden Codex, pp. 4-5 (from Villacorta and Villacorta 1977).

art.[22] The Starry Deer Crocodile may thus serve as a representation for the darkened "Underworld sky," and in this capacity its role overlaps somewhat with the more conventional understanding of the crocodile as a symbol of the earth. That is, the earth below us was, to an Underworld inhabitant, the sky above. (The iconography surrounding the Celestial Monster and its relatives is exceedingly complex and varied, and can be revisited at a later date.)

In the Temple XIX passage we have two sequential references to the Starry Deer Crocodile, with only a single alternation in each. The first name, as we have briefly touched upon, makes use of a so-called "hole" sign before the hunched back and the Starry Deer Crocodile's head. The next crocodile name is more easily understood, showing the "hole" replaced by the modifier *tz'ib-al* (**tz'i-ba-la**), "painted, written," or perhaps simply "spotted." If we entertain the **PAAT** reading for the "back" sign, we can perhaps read the second reference in full as **tz'i-ba-la-PAAT-**"Starry Deer Crocodile," the "Painted-Back 'Starry Deer Crocodile'" or "Written-Back 'Starry Deer Crocodile'." Such a name or designation, while odd-sounding at first, does seem related to a few known representations of the crocodile with hieroglyphs painted along the length its body (see D. Stuart 2003b) (Figure 46). Taube (1989) associated these and other images with the concept of the "Earth Caiman" of Late Postclassic Yucatan, called in some sources Itzam Kab Ayin. The Palenque glyph may name a specific aspect of this broader animate aspect of the earth, and I hazard to guess that it is directly related to these widespread images of "inscribed" crocodiles, however we might eventually come to interpret them.

The "hole" sign cited in these names deserves a few comments, since it is an important element of the script and a significant symbol within Maya iconography. This crescent-shaped sign has been discussed by a number of scholars, and there is general agreement that it represents some cavity within the earth, such as a cave or cenote (Thompson 1972:150). In iconographic settings the hole symbol can readily transform into a bony serpent's mouth or maw, and it is often used as the setting for the emergence or descent of gods or people from, or into, the earth's surface (Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993:269). In a recent study,

[22] Freidel, Schele, and Parker (1993:85-87) offer a somewhat similar interpretation of that Temple 22 doorway, but they overextend the interpretation to include the more standard "Stony Crocodile" that is, in my view, the symbol of the consuming earth.



a b

Figure 47. The "hole" in the crocodile's back: (a) incised jade, possibly from the Río Azul region (drawing by David Stuart after Townsend 1983:No. 56), (b) clay censer figurine from Santa Rita, Belize (after Gann 1918:Fig.18).

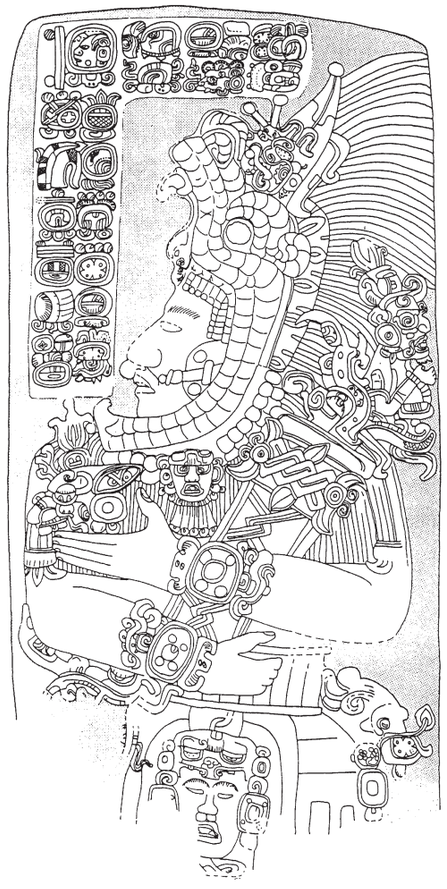


Figure 48. Lamanai, Stela 9 (drawing by Stanley Loten).

Taube (2003) suggests that the bony snake is in fact a centipede, and that the hole sign and motif derives from the representation of pincers on a centipede. A well known example of its iconographic use comes from the sarcophagus lid of Pakal at Palenque, depicting the deceased king's emergence from the Underworld as the reborn sun of the east. The precise reading of the glyphic "hole" element is difficult to nail down with much confidence, despite having a fairly good semantic understanding of the term as something like "hole, cavity, opening," etc. The sign often takes the suffix **-ya**, suggesting a CV**Y** or C**AY** value. Schele opted for the reading **WAY**, "cistern, room," although this requires more testing before it can be widely applied to the sign.

In the Palenque glyph, then, we have a reference to something named (in rough paraphrase) the "Hole-Backed 'Starry Deer Crocodile'," if we again consider the **PAAT** or "back" value of the hunched-over body sign. Remarkably, Maya art shows several representations of crocodiles or reptiles with holes in their backs. One possible representation of this entity comes from an Early Classic earspool, where the central hole of the jade appears on the body of the creature (Figure 47a). Another example can be seen on a Late Postclassic ceramic figure excavated many



a b c

Figure 49. Water bands: (a) T. XIX platform, (b-c) wall paintings of Río Azul, Tomb 1.

years ago by Gann at Santa Rita, Belize (Gann 1918) (Figure 47b). Few iconographic details are present on this figurine, but the crocodile clearly has a deer antler, and its back is a large hole or receptacle.

The crocodile or other reptile with a hole in its back can be traced far back into Preclassic Maya art. On Stela 8 from Izapa, a reptile of some sort has on its back a quatrefoil cartouche enclosing an enthroned figure. More direct parallels are found in representations of upright crocodiles that form trees from their tails, as depicted on Izapa Stelae 25 and 27. In the second of these monuments, the trunk of the tree shows the quatrefoil "hole." Another likely representation from the Maya lowlands comes from a recently unearthed stucco frieze at Becan, Campeche, dating to the Early Classic (Campaña and Boucher 2002). Its design is based on an inverted human form, with the head of a ruler at the base of a large tree trunk that, as in similar scenes (see vessel K6547 in Justin Kerr's photographic database at www.famsi.org), seems to be equated with his torso and the body of a crocodile. The hands of the ruler form the roots of the tree, and his back the trunk. The large quatrefoil cavity above the headdress of the Becan frieze thus can be seen as a hole in the figure's back.[23] The specific connections among these curious iconographic elements are obscure, but there is enough to strongly suggest some connection to the hieroglyphic term at Palenque.

Before leaving the discussion of the enigmatic crocodiles, it is interesting to draw a few further associations about the crocodile sacrifice mentioned in Passage S-2. Lamanai Stela 9, for example, is remarkable for showing a local king holding the head of the Starry Deer Crocodile in his hand (Figure 48); all other images I know of show the entire body of the creature. Although the carrying or holding of gods' heads is common in Early Classic iconography at Tikal and elsewhere, the Stela 9 example could well be connected to the Starry Deer Crocodile's decapitation on 1 Etz'nab 6 Yaxk'in. Another fascinating association comes from Tikal, where the famous Burial 10 contained, along with the probable remains of the ruler Nun Yax Ahin, the headless body of a crocodile (Coggins 1975:147; W. Coe 1990, II:484).

Returning now to Passage S-2, the inscription continues at F4 with the first of several glyphs that are very hard to read. I suspect that F4 gives us a new verb, the second of three clauses within the passage. The main sign is rare, but iconically its variants seem to represent the "water band" sometimes found in Maya iconography involving the Underworld (Hellmuth 1987) (Figure 49). These bands may well represent rivers and streams. The numerical prefix "three" may be adverbial ("thrice?"), and the **-ja** suffix may mark the verb as a passive form, but overall the significance of this verb is difficult to ascertain.

[23] It is tempting to suppose that this visual equivalence between an inverted crocodile or human figure and a tree is reflected more generally in the shared meanings of the root *pat* as both "back" and "bark" in most lowland Mayan languages (e.g. Tzotzil *patil*).

Its subject at E5 is a possessed noun probably read **U-CH'ICH'-le** or **U-K'IK'-le**, for *u-ch'ich'el*, "its blood." The reading of the trefoil main sign as "blood" is proposed in a recent paper (D. Stuart 2002), and in this context such a decipherment certainly seems fitting. Together with the "stream" verb in the preceding block, I am led to wonder if the larger phrase is something along the lines of "thrice the blood flowed," although without a secure reading of the verb, such a reading must remain speculative.[24] It is interesting to note, however, that one image of the cosmic reptile shown on a remarkable Early Classic vessel excavated at Becan (Campaña and Boucher 2002) clearly shows it bleeding profusely, with three sacrificed humans (without the lower halves of their bodies) surrounding it. This may well relate to the passage from Temple XIX, describing the results of the mythical sacrifice and decapitation of the crocodile(s).

The next two glyphs (F5 and E6) seem to form a couplet and may refer indirectly to the crocodile, or crocodiles, mentioned in the previous phrase. Both have very interesting and similar internal structures, consisting perhaps of (1) a transitive verb root, (2) a direct object, and (3) the suffix sign **-AJ**. We see this most clearly in the second of the pair at E6, where **jo-ch'o** spells the verb *joch'*, "to drill something," and **K'AHK'**, "fire," provides a verb-object combination ("fire-drilling") found elsewhere in Maya texts (Houston 1988; D. Stuart 1997). The *-aj* suffix (not to be confused with the passive verb ending) does appear in some other settings where it suggests a meaning of "person, entity," and I suspect that here *jochk'ahk'aj* may well be analyzed as "fire-drill entity." I suspect it is a descriptive term for the Starry Deer-Crocodile.[25] If we apply a similar structural analysis to the glyph at F5, we might entertain the existence of a transitive verb root *nak* (**na-ka**) and a direct object spelled by the same "water-band"**-wa** combination found in block F4. No transitive root *nak* can be systematically traced in Ch'olan languages, but in Tumbalá Ch'ol we do find *ñak* in various derivations for "sit" (Aulie and Aulie 1978:84). I doubt that is its intended meaning here, and further research into the linguistic aspects of this passage may well prove rewarding.[26] In any event, it is certainly interesting to see the passage relate fire-drilling to the "flowing blood" described in the earlier blocks, for the relationship between sacrifice and fire-drilling is well established throughout Mesoamerica (for example, see Miller and Taube 1993:87).

Glyph I6 reads **I-PAT-la-ja**, *i-pat-l-aj*, "it is shaped, built." Unfortunately it is left unstated exactly what was constructed or fashioned. The passage closes with a mention of the god GI, following the curious and still undeciphered **ye-TE'-je** verb. The latter occurs with particular frequency in Palenque's inscriptions, usually as a "secondary" verb before the name of a king or principal actor. It seems related to a glyph (**ye-je-TE'**) commonly seen at Yaxchilan between the names of captives and captors. Schele (1992:99) proposed that this was based on a Ch'ol root *e't*, meaning "work, authority," which to me still seems a reasonable, if unconfirmed, possibility. Whatever the reading, parallel examples of the **ye-TE'-je** verb at Palenque and elsewhere leave no doubt that GI is the principal actor behind the events described in the preceding glyph blocks.

To summarize this complex passage, we can confidently say that it records the sacrifice of one or two crocodiles, seemingly by the deity GI some eleven years after his inauguration, recorded earlier.

[24] In several inscriptions the blood sign is combined with another "watery" verb, read *nahb-aj*, probably "was pooled…" I do not think the "stream" verb on Temple XIX is the same, but I suspect that there is a similar rhetorical connection between blood and water at work

[25] The connection to fire is interesting in light of the following description from the *Relación de Mérida*, quoted by Thompson (1970:217): "They also had knowledge…of the flood and that the world must come to an end with fire, and to show this they made a ceremony and painted a *lagarto* which signified flood and the earth. And on it they placed a great mound of firewood, and set fire to it." The mention of painting a crocodile is also fascinating, given the presence of *tz'ib* in one of the paired crocodile names in the passage under discussion.

[26] *Nak* is an attested transitive verb in Colonial Tzotzil meaning to "do battle" or "to conquer" (Laughlin 1988). Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 from Dos Pilas shows a likely use of the same verb root in the spelling of the transitive form **U-na-ka-wa**, *u-nak-aw-ø*, "he fights him," possibly in reference to a war between Ruler 1 of Dos Pilas and a lord from "Koban" (Houston 1993; Grube and Schele 1993). Despite the restricted appearance of the *nak* root in modern dictionaries, its militaristic associations can be indirectly seen in *nakomal*, a term for "enemy" in Colonial Tzeltal (Humberto Ruz 1986), and *nakom*, "warrior," in Classical Yucatec.

Passage S-3 (Figure 50)

Summary: An interval of 2.8.3.8.0 connects the inauguration of GI to the day of his own probable rebirth on 1.18.5.3.2 9 Ik' 15 Keh, a date that is prominently recorded in the Temple of the Cross. The interval is a multiple of 260 days (hence the shared "9 Ik'" days) and equals twenty-nine Dresden eclipse cycles (29 x 11,960 days). The rebirth event takes place at a supernatural location known as Matwil, which became strongly identified with the Palenque polity in Classic times.

Continuing on through columns G and H, after the name of GI we come to a Distance Number of 2.8.3.8.0 expressed at G2-H3. In the next three glyph blocks we find **u-ti-ya** (G4) followed by the familiar Calendar Round date 9 Ik' 5 Mol (at H4 and G5). The completive verb *uht-iiy*, "it happened," before the 9 Ik' date calls for the addition of the Distance Number to that base, and not to the date last recorded in Passage 2 (1 Etz'nab 6 Yaxk'in). The calculation from the Initial Series 12.10.1.13.2 9 Ik' 5 Mol leads to 1.18.5.3.2 9 Ik' 15 Keh, recorded after the **I-u-ti** verb at G6-H6. This date is, of course, well known in Palenque mythology as the birth date of GI of the Palenque Triad, as recorded in two places in the Temple of the Cross (Kelley 1965; Lounsbury 1976).

The citation of GI's birth date is particularly interesting, since we have already read of this god in connection with two earlier events in the inscription: his accession in the opening passage and his involve-

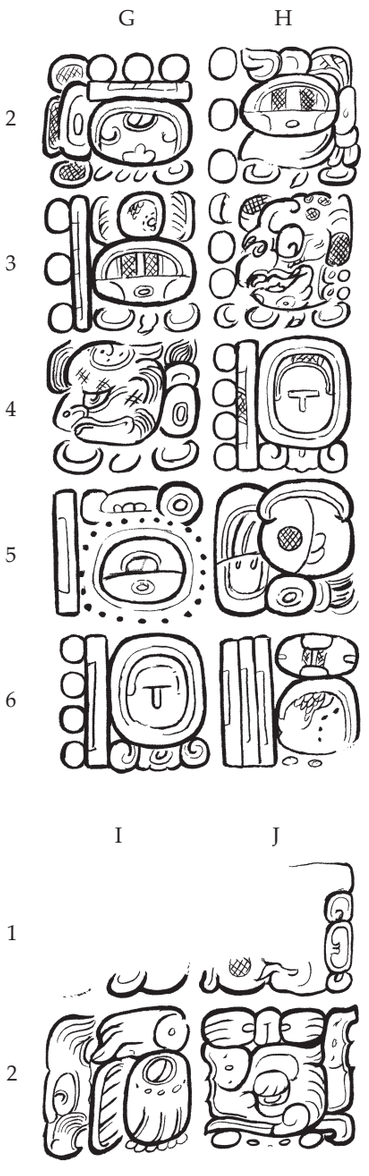


Figure 50. Temple XIX platform, Passage S-3.

ment in some capacity with the decapitation episode of Passage 2. How could he be "born" centuries after these two important events? As we have already seen, GI's birth on 1.18.5.3.2 9 Ik' 15 Keh is also stated in the inscription on the Tablet of the Cross, with the similar conundrum that he is also mentioned there as an actor prior to his own birth (Lounsbury 1976). The problem was resolved to Lounsbury's satisfaction by the reconstruction of another, elder GI deity, indistinguishable in name, who was the "First Father" of the Triad deities (Lounsbury 1976; Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993:69). The information presented by the new Temple XIX platform inscription requires us to revisit this problem, but this complex issue is best left for a separate discussion in Chapter 6.

Before we move on to the record of the birth event itself, a brief return to the Distance Number linking the accession and birth dates reveals several interesting numerical and astronomical properties. The interval 2.8.3.8.0 is a multiple of 260 days, of course, as shown by the shared 9 Ik' day of both dates (we will see that the repetition of the day 9 Ik' is central to this entire text, as it will reappear two more times). The interval is also the product of 29 x 11,960 days, or the unit of the eclipse cycle as recorded on pages 51-58 of the Dresden Codex. The lunar focus of this day interval, contrived by the priests of Late Classic Palenque, anticipates the significant importance of the moon in the like-in-kind dates and events cited throughout this inscription (Christopher Powell, personal communication 1998).

Passage S-3 continues with the initial glyphs of the right-side text panel, requiring the reader to move across the figural scene to pick up the inscription in mid-stream. Such a design was probably intended by the artist and scribe, for GI is the central focus of the scene itself; the record of his "birth" would in this way bracket the representation of the ruler impersonating this god.

The glyph at I1 unfortunately presents the first totally effaced glyph of the inscription; only a few details of the lower left corner of the block are visible. The context of the glyph after the 9 Ik' 15 Keh date strongly suggests that it ought to be a "birth" glyph of some sort, and the remains of the block indeed suggest that it is the standard "up-ended frog" variant, possibly **SIH?-ya-ja** for *siy-aj*, "he is born." The **-ya-ja** suffixes are just discernible in the surviving portion. The following glyph (J1) too is partially effaced, but there is no doubt it is GI's complete name. The passage therefore states rather simply "GI is born."

The next two blocks are also familiar from parallel statements in the Cross Group. The first of these, at I2, is a possessed noun **U-"**hand"**-ka-ba** that likely derives from a transitive verb construction where the palm-down hand is a verb root and the direct object **ka-ba**, for *kab*, "earth." Lounsbury (1980:112-113) made note of the very same glyph in the Cross Group temples (often with the single logogram **KAB** replacing the **ka-ba**) and saw it was always in association with a divine birth date or event (Figure 51). He brilliantly surmised that it was a



Figure 51. The "hand-over-earth" (**U-TAL?-KAB**) birth expression, from the *alfarda* of the Temple of the Foliated Cross (drawing by Linda Schele).



Figure 52. Mentions of Matwil in non-Palenque texts: (a) from a polychrome vase, K792, (b) lintel from the Yaxchilan area (La Pasadita?) (drawing by Peter Mathews).

a b

metaphor for "birth" and related to a series of Ch'ol expressions such as *ilan panimil*, "to see the world," and perhaps most relevant to the glyph in question, *täl lum*, "touch-earth."

Building on Lounsbury's discovery, there is the possibility that the downturned hand sign of the glyph is a logogram read **TAL**, a transitive root in both Ch'ol and Ch'orti' for "to touch something," giving a fuller reading **U-TAL-KAB**, or *u-tal-kab*, "it is his earth-touching." In its other appearances this expression is always followed either directly or indirectly by the familiar place name **ma-ta-wi-la** (Figure 51), for *Matwil*. The Temple XIX passage likewise features this place glyph but with the unusual spelling **ma-MAT-wi-la**, where the familiar **MAT** bird stands for the **ma-ta** of other examples. We will find this toponym cited again in Passage S-5, in a parallel setting after the "touching earth" expression for birth. I would argue that the toponymic reference specifies the place of the "touching" as it were, giving a precise name for the "earth" cited in the preceding glyph. Taken together, this subordinate sentence of Passage S-3 says (using the possible **TAL** value for the hand) *u-tal-kab Matwil*, "(it is) his earth-touching (at) Matwil."

A pressing question remains: what—or better yet, where—is Matwil? Its function as a mythological place name seems secure (Stuart and Houston 1994:75-77), and it is cited now in several texts as the place where the Triad gods were born. Matwil, a toponym seemingly based on *mat*, "comorant," is cited in three inscriptions outside of Palenque (Figure 52), indicating that it may have held some general importance as a cosmological location beyond the concerns of Palenque's own mythological narrative. At the same time, Matwil's unique prominence within Palenque's inscriptions—it is at times an Emblem Glyph for local kings and queens—suggests that it was tied to the local dynasty in some specific and widely recognized way. The identity of the place will probably remain mysterious for some time to come, but there are a number of intriguing patterns associated with the events and iconography connected with it. As we will see in discussions in Chapter 5, Matwil is closely associated with the Palenque Triad, and especially with the deity GI, who is so clearly a focus of attention within the Cross Group temples as a whole. However we interpret its significance, the prominent role of cormorants or water bird imagery in Temple XIX shows us that Matwil's identity and meaning are keys to the overall symbolic presentation of Temple XIX.

Passage S-4 (Figure 53)

Summary: A short interval of four days takes us to a simple statement of the birth of the second-born Triad god, GIII.

This section consists of a mere four glyphs, all of which are readable. There is no Distance Number to carry the chronology forward, but simply the statement of the Calendar Round 13 Kimi 19 Keh, a date well known from the Tablet of the Sun as the birthday of the next member of the Palenque Triad, GIII. The Long Count placement is 1.18.5.3.6, only four days after the appearance of GI (Kelley 1965):

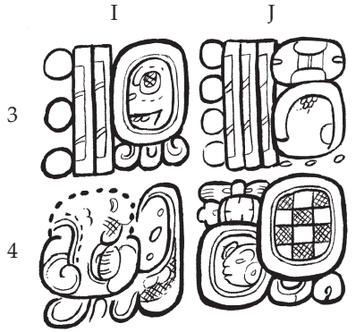


Figure 53. Temple XIX platform, Passage S-4.

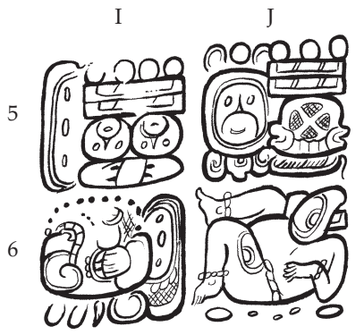




Figure 54. Temple XIX platform, Passage S-5.

1. 18. 5. 3. 2		9 Ik' 15 Keh
	4	
1. 18. 5. 3. 6		13 Kimi 19 Keh

The verb at I4 is a conventional "birth" glyph, probably read *sihy-aj*, "he is born," with the subject named in the following block as GIII. The variant forms and reading of his name glyph, as with the other Triad gods, will be treated in Chapter 5.

Passage S-5 (Figure 54)

Summary: An interval of fourteen days counts forward to 1.18.5.4.0 1 Ajaw 13 Mak, the birth date of GII of the Palenque Triad. In a parallel to GI's birth record, GII is said to have "touched the earth" at the Matwil location. The births of GII and his two brothers are the "creations of" an important mythological figure (the "Triad Progenitor") who was perhaps an aspect of the maize god.

Next we encounter a Distance Number of fourteen days written with the specialized phrase **U-14-ta-la**, *u-chanlajun-tal*. This is counted from the birth date of GIII in the previous passage. The Calendar Round 1 Ajaw 13 Mak appears in the following block (J5, now in a more compressed format than other dates in the text), corresponding to 1.18.5.4.0, a date featured in the texts of the Temple of the Foliated Cross. As expected, the event is again birth (I6), now in association with the deity GII (J6). This deity is the infant K'awil and the last born of the Triad gods. As in Passage S-3, the birth record of the Triad member is followed by *u-tal?-kab Matwil*, "he touched(?) the earth at Matwil," written in the two glyphs at K1 and L1.

Passages S-3, S-4, and S-5 clearly form a discrete unit within the narrative of the inscription, recording the three closely spaced births of the Triad gods. The final glyphs of Passage S-5 seem to hearken back to all of these events in expressing a key relationship between the three deities and another major player in Palenque mythology, the "First Mother" figure who is celebrated in the Temple of the Cross. This character has gone by many names in the literature, among them Lounsbury's "Lady Methuselah" (due to her great age) or "Lady Beast-with-the-upturned-snout." This last nickname quickly came to be shortened to "Lady Beastie," the name by which the deity is perhaps best known today.

Glyph K2 is **U-BAAH-hi** and L2 is **U-CH'AB**, two glyphs that form a familiar pairing in many Maya inscriptions. In fact, in a close parallel to the Temple XIX passage, the very same *u-baah u-ch'ab* combination occurs in the main inscription of the Tablet of the Sun, where it links the names of GIII with the "First Mother" (Figure 55). For years these relationship glyphs have been widely seen as a variation on a common "parentage expression," as first identified by Schele, Mathews, and Lounsbury (1977). For this reason, Lounsbury, Schele, and others interpreted the name featured after *u-baah u-ch'ab* as that of a "mother goddess" who gave birth to the Triad deities. Since then the important functional identification of the glyphic phrase, its reading, and literal meaning came to be better understood. The phrase *u-baah u-ch'ab* contains no direct reference to a child-parent relationship, but instead can be glossed as "his person (or body) is the creation of..." That is, it is a general statement linking one person or entity to its "creator."

An in-depth discussion of the name and identity of the "creator" will also come in Chapter 5, but to summarize a few important points I should say that the gender of the "Triad Progenitor," as I prefer to call this deity, seems now open to question. I believe there is good evidence to suggest that it is a male figure, and not a "mother goddess" as previously understood. I furthermore believe that this creator god was a specific manifestation of the young maize god, who was of course known to be a major player in Maya creation mythology. But more of this later.



Figure 55. Portion of the main inscription from the Tablet of the Sun, C10-D13 (drawing by Linda Schele).

Passage S-6 (Figure 56)

Summary: The narrative carries forward thirty-five years to the inauguration of the "Triad Progenitor" on 2.0.0.10.2 9 Ik' Seating of Sak. The accession is "the first" of a series, indicating the deity's role as a founder or creator figure within Palenque's political and mythological history. The Triad Progenitor carries the title Holy Lord of Matwil, the "Place of Cormorants."

Blocks K4-K5 introduce Passage S-6 with the Distance Number 1.15.6.2, expressing an interval of about thirty-five years. This leads from 1.18.5.4.0 1 Ajaw 13 Mac, the birth date of GII, to 2.0.0.10.2 9 Ik' Seating of Sak, written as a Calendar Round at L5 and K6. The calculation can be expressed thus:

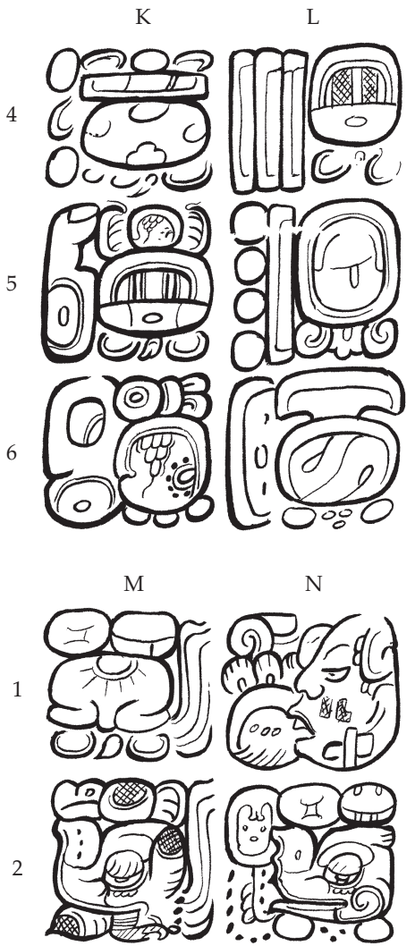


Figure 56. Temple XIX platform, Passage S-6.

1.18. 5. 4. 0 1 Ajaw 13 Mak
1.15. 6. 2
2. 0. 0.10. 2 9 Ik' Seating of Sak

The resulting date also is familiar to students of Palenque's mythological texts, appearing in three other inscriptions as the accession date of the same ancestral "Triad Progenitor" who we saw named in the previous passage.

The verbal statement at L6 and M1 includes, in the second of these blocks, an accession statement found elsewhere at Palenque, with its distinctive-looking main sign of two seemingly squatting legs. Mathews and Schele (1974) showed that this verb must somehow be one of royal inauguration, since it appears with the accession record of K'inich Kan Bahlam on the Palace Tablet, in addition to other kings on the Del Rio Throne of the Palace (see Schele and Mathews 1979). Oddly enough, this form of the accession verb is restricted only to Palenque's inscriptions, for reasons unknown.[27] The preceding glyph in this passage, at L6, is an adverbial modifier **U-NAAH-TAL-la**, or *u-naah-tal*, "the first." These two blocks together are very similar to the opening glyphs of the well known Yaxchilan king list from Structure 12 of that site (Figure 57), where before the name of the first king in the sequence we find **U-NAAH-TAL-la** flowed by a glyph with squatting legs (now in profile) and an **AJAW** superfix. There can be little doubt that the Palenque text is here recording a similar kind of "first accession," although one mythological in nature.

[27] The full form of this particular accession verb consistently has an **AJAW** sign above the legs and the suffixes **-ya-ni**. It is a small leap to suppose that this represents nothing more than a local Palenque version of the more widespread expression **AJAW-ya-ni**, for *ajaw-yan-ø*, "(he, she) becomes a lord." Although itself not a very common means of recording accession, it is found in many sites, including Naranjo and Tamarindito. One striking feature of *ajaw-yan-ø* events is their placement in time: they are consistently associated with very ancient gods and events, and seldom with historical kings. While we need to ponder the question further, I feel the frequent use of the inchoative form *ajaw-yan-ø* is appropriate with such founding deities, since they are not "seated" or otherwise "passively" installed the way historical kings seem to be. That is, they simply "become lords" as part of a *sui generis* process. We will find in the next passage of the Temple XIX platform an exception to this pattern, but one that may in fact prove the rule.



Figure 57. Yaxchilan, Lintel 11.

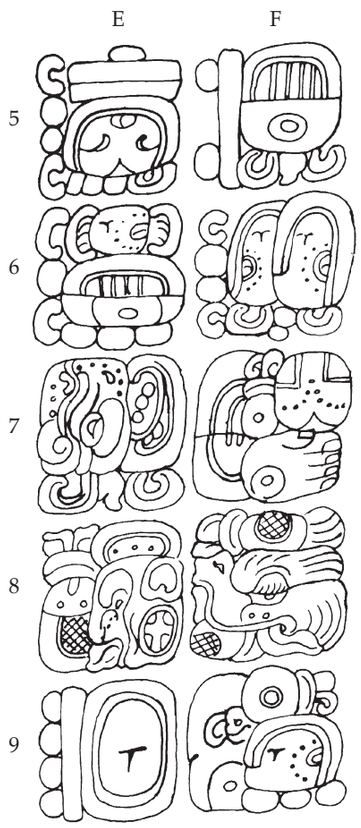


Figure 58. Passage from the Tablet of the Cross, E5-F9 (drawing by Linda Schele).

The name of the so-called First Mother, or "Lady Beastie," comes next at N1 and M2, in a form that is essentially identical to that encountered in Passage S-5. One noteworthy difference here is the addition of a Matwil Emblem Glyph title at N2, which was not present in the preceding reference to this deity. Its appearance here is certainly related to the inaugural event, where the Triad Progenitor presumably assumes the status of a "holy lord." Interestingly, the Triad Progenitor deity never takes the more standard "bone" variant of the Palenque emblem, read Baakal (**BAAK-la**), and in other examples of the Triad Progenitor name we find the Matwil title spelled with logograms, as here, or with syllables (see Figure 11). The parallel cases are important, for they firmly establish that the **MAT-la** emblem is a shortened spelling of the fuller place name **ma-ta-wi-la**.

So ends Passage S-6, but before we move on it is important to note that Temple XIX's record of the date 9 Ik' Seating of Sak helps resolve a long-standing problem in interpreting the chronology presented on the Tablet of the Cross, which has been discussed by several

earlier writers (Berlin 1965; Lounsbury 1976; Schele and Miller 1986:59). Blocks F7 through F9 of that inscription refer to the very same date and accession event (Figure 58), and follow a Distance Number written 2.1.7.11.2, intended to specify the time elapsed from the birth of the Triad Progenitor to his accession. However, if we add this time interval to the established date of the birth, written as the Initial Series date of the Cross Tablet, the result is problematic (the conflicting elements of the date are shown in italics):

12. 19. 13. 4. 0 8 Ajaw 18 Tzek (Old Era)
2. 1. 7. 11. 2 add
(2. 1. 0. 15. 2) *3* Ik' Seating of Sak

The conflict centers on the "9 Ik'" written at E9, since 3 Ik' is the result of the expressed calculation. In light of the occasional scribal errors we encounter in other inscriptions, we might not be too concerned about a single deviation in the numerical prefix to the day sign, but the problem with this text spreads somewhat deeper. As Berlin (1965) noted long ago, one Winal less than the resulting date above is 2.1.0.14.2 9 Ik' Seating of Yax, which is in fact used as a base date for the Distance Numbers recorded in later passages of the Tablet of the Cross. Because of this, Berlin saw 2.1.0.14.2 9 Ik' Seating of Yax as the true intended date of the calculation, necessitating a minor adjustment of one Winal in the lengthy Distance Number (2.1.7.10.2) linking the birth to the accession (see also Schele and Miller 1986:59). Berlin and Schele both surmised that the Distance Number could have been written correctly but was calculated in error from the 819-day count station recorded on the Cross Tablet, which falls twenty days before the birth date. In this scenario the result would be:

(12. 19. 13. 3. 0) 1 Ajaw 18 Sotz'
2. 1. 7. 11. 2 add
(2. 1. 0. 14. 2) 9 Ik' Seating of *Yax*

The 9 Ik' is now corrected, but the month is off by one. Here we would need to assume two domains of error: the base date of the calculation itself and the writing of the month Sak in place of the intended Yax.

In wrestling with this problem, we must recall that the Temple XIX text clearly records 2.0.0.10.2 9 Ik' Seating of Sak, a date well anchored within the internal chronology of that inscription. Were this not enough, two other Palenque inscriptions cite the date of the Triad Progenitor's accession. The Temple XVIII jambs contain the clearest of these (Berlin 1965), with 9 Ik' Seating of Sak linked to the accession date of the ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, just as we will find on the Temple XIX text:

(2. 0. 0. 10. 2) 9 Ik' Seating of Sak
7. 14. 9. 12. 0 add
(9. 14. 10. 4. 2) 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab

The same dates and time interval can be found in the painted inscription under the vault spring of House E in the Palace (Figure 59). Thus, with three other independent citations for the 2.0.0.10.2 9 Ik' Seating of Sak date we cannot doubt its veracity. Furthermore, the House E text provides a Glyph G4 with its reference, which is correct for a 2.0.0.10.2 placement; the alternative 2.1.0.14.2 date put forward by Schele would call for a Glyph G5.

There is little choice but to assume that "9 Ik' Seating of Sak" on the Cross Tablet is correct as written. The error in the Cross Tablet must therefore lie in the Distance Number

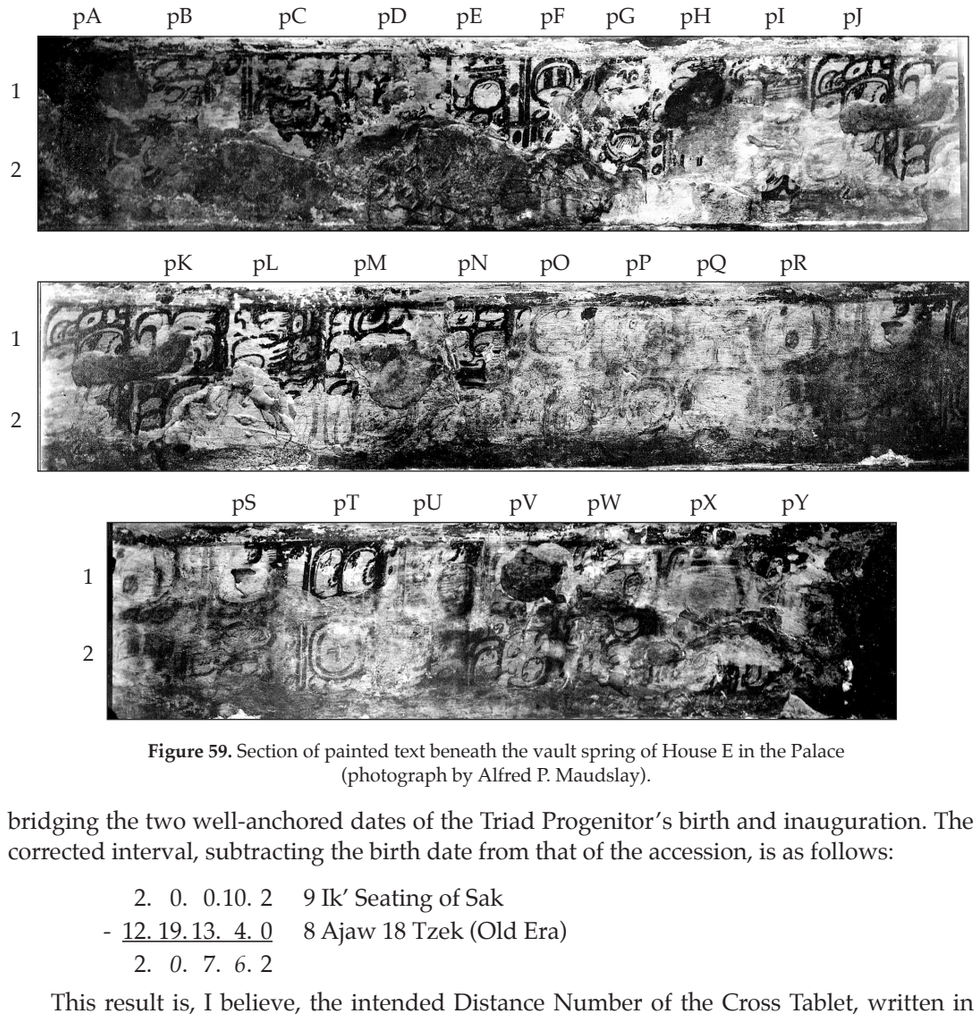


Figure 59. Section of painted text beneath the vault spring of House E in the Palace (photograph by Alfred P. Maudslay).

bridging the two well-anchored dates of the Triad Progenitor's birth and inauguration. The corrected interval, subtracting the birth date from that of the accession, is as follows:

2. 0. 0.10. 2 9 Ik' Seating of Sak
- 12. 19. 13. 4. 0 8 Ajaw 18 Tzek (Old Era)
2. *0*. 7. *6*. 2

This result is, I believe, the intended Distance Number of the Cross Tablet, written in error as "2.1.7.11.2." The mistake is confined now to the Distance Number alone, and we can perhaps imagine the "zero" of the K'atun period and the "6" of the Winal being mistakenly carved as "1" and an "11," respectively.

The revised chronology places the inauguration of the Triad Progenitor more than one K'atun earlier than previously considered reconstructions. The adjustment is hardly a major one, of course, given that the age of this ancestral figure was 2.0.7.6.2 at the time of accession, or slightly over eight centuries (Lounsbury 1976).

Passage S-7 (Figure 60)

Summary: The narrative now shifts to historical time, as a Distance Number of 7.14.9.12.0 reaches 9.14.10.4.2 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab, the accession date of the ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. The event is presented textually in a way that evokes the accession of the Triad Progenitor, using the same distinctive "seating" expression on a shared "9 Ik'" date.

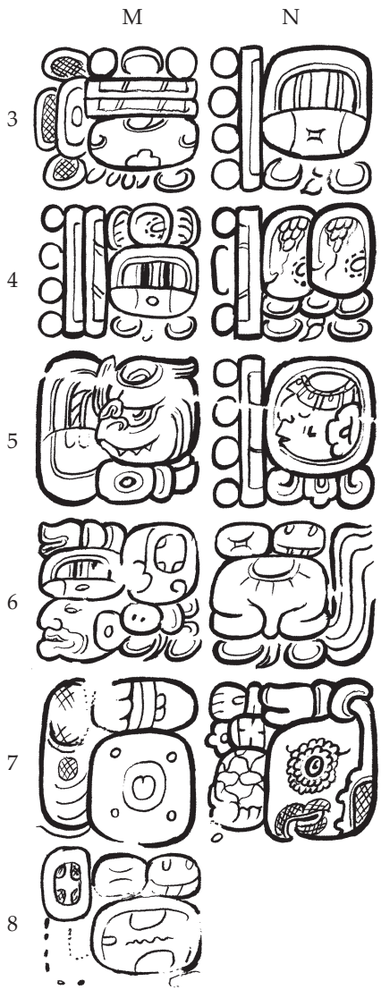


Figure 60. Temple XIX platform, Passage S-7.

The next passage brings us out of mythical time and into the roughly contemporary history of Palenque by connecting the accession of the Triad Progenitor to that of the ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. The lengthy Distance Number at M3-N4 is 7.14.9.12.0, which leads from the 2.0.0.10.2 9 Ik' Seating of Sak to a new Calendar Round 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab, written at N5 and M6, or 9.14.10.4.2, the day of the king's accession, as recorded in several other Palenque texts.[28] The calculation is straightforward:

2.	0.	0.	10.	2	9 Ik' Seating of Sak
7.	14.	9.	12.	0	
9.	14.	10.	4.	2	9 Ik' 5 K'ayab

The Ik' day sign at N5 is a head variant, identical to what we saw used in the opening Initial Series of the inscription. This is the fourth "9 Ik'" date of the text—a repetition to be addressed shortly—and I feel it likely that the use of head variants in two of these occurrences was not a random choice by the scribe. We should remember that these two dates are the accessions of the "pre-Triad" GI and the Palenque ruler, respectively, and perhaps something as subtle as the shared visual appearance of a day sign served to strengthen the connection between these two like-in-kind episodes.

As Lounsbury (1976:220-221) insightfully determined, the interval between these two dates (7.14.9.12.0) is a "contrived number" incorporating even multiples of several important astronomical and calendrical periods. Most obviously, the Distance Number contains precisely 4,278 cycles of 260 days—a continuation of the recurring pattern of "9 Ik's" in this inscription. In addition, Lounsbury also noted that the interval corresponds to the probable Mars period of three 260-day rounds (780 days) as well as an integral multiple of Dresden eclipse cycles, each of 11,960 days.

Significantly, the accession date of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb falls on G1 of the nine-day "Lords of the Night" cycle. This is not true of the Triad Progenitor's inauguration, which calls for G4, yet it does provide a

[28] Other records of the 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab date and its associated accession event appear on the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, the Tablet of the Slaves, the painted text of House E in the Palace, and also the stucco text and door jamb of Temple XVIII.

small but meaningful connection to the 9 Ik' inauguration date of GI, recorded at the beginning of the inscription.

As expected, the event accompanying 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab is "accession," here written with the same distinctive "squatting legs" used in the preceding passage. The connection to the Triad Progenitor's accession, also on 9 Ik', is reiterated through the use of this verb phrase (recall that his was said to be the "first" such event), but it is interesting that GI's accession record at the outset of this text is worded very differently: *chum-l-aj-ø ta-ajaw-le(l)*. I think it probable that such different phrasings imply different types of events and rituals surrounding the accession of new rulers. In terms of textual presentation, the like-in-kind relationship between the accessions of the two Palenque rulers—one mythical and one historical—seems stronger than that of either to GI's inauguration in the more distant and universal past.

The most remarkable part of this passage is the curious glyph that follows the accession verb and precedes the king's name, written **o-ki-bi**, evidently for *okib*. On the west side, as we shall see, a similar word appears as a possessed noun (**yo-ko-bi-li**, *y-ok(i)b-il*), probably in reference to a monument or construction of some type. It would be tempting to see the *okib* after the accession verb as a marker of location, but as it happens we find the same word (unmarked for possession) in connection with other personal names. On the west side of the platform, to anticipate somewhat, it appears in the name caption of the central figure, a nobleman named Salaj Bolon. Okib is also found with the name of Upakal K'inich in the horizontal glyph band from Temple XXI's platform. All of these uses suggest that it is a title of some sort, perhaps associated with future kings. More of this will be discussed in Chapter 3 in connection with the central figure of the platform's west tablet.

The passage ends with the name and Emblem Glyph of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. The form of the name glyph shows the same distinctive arrangement of signs as found at the very end of the text on Temple XIX's stone panel, where a turtleshell (**AHK**) and a macaw's head (**MO'**) spell the two core elements of the name. Here the king's Emblem Glyph is the standard Baakal term, providing an important contrast with the Matwil emblem used for the Triad Progenitor in the previous passage.

Passage S-8 (Figure 61)

Summary: From the accession of the ruler we move forward to the record of his first major Period Ending ceremony on 9.14.13.0.0 6 Ajaw 8 Keh. This is described as his "first stone-binding," as well as a time when the ruler "took" certain objects of unknown significance. The Period Ending ritual took place in the presence of the Triad deities and, in the closing passage, "before the spring of Lakamha'."

A Distance Number of 2.13.18 is recorded at N8 and O1, which when added to the king's inauguration date reaches the Period Ending 9.14.13.0.0 6 Ajaw 8 Keh.[29] This Calendar Round appears at P1 and O2, with a record of "thirteen stones" **(13-TUUN-ni)** at P2. A descriptive gloss in the next block notes that this was "the first stone binding." The end of thirteen Tuns is known to have been a significant subdivision of the K'atun, and here it is singled out as the "first" important calendar rite of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb's reign, falling under three years after his accession.

The featured event phrase comes in the next glyph, possibly read **U-K'AM?-wa-OOB?,**

[29] The Period Ending 9.14.13.0.0 6 Ajaw 8 Keh occurs also on a fragment of a stone *incensario* stand found in excavations of Temple XVIII and published by Schele and Mathews (1979:No. 119). In that inscription it seems to be an anticipatory date. No historical information apparently survives in the remaining glyphs.

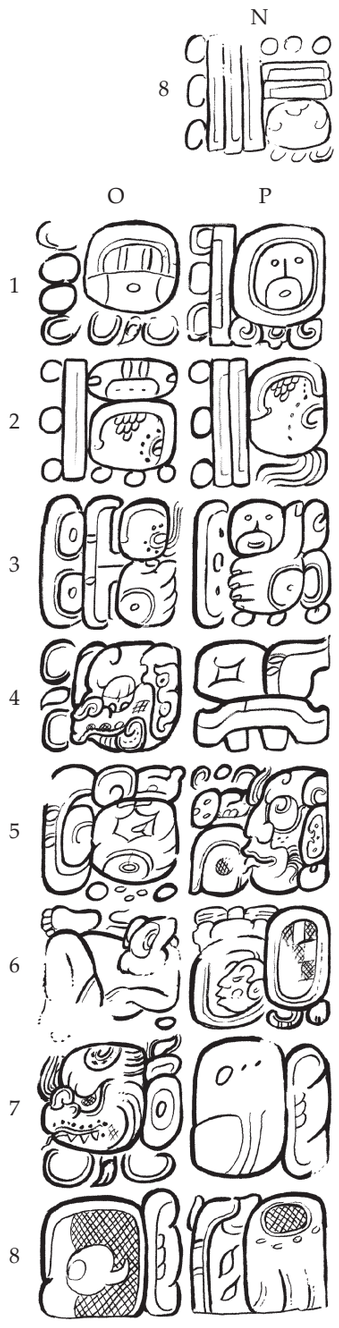


Figure 61. Temple XIX platform, Passage S-8.

u-k'am-aw-oob, "he takes them…" The verb is clearly a transitive construction (ergative pronoun – CVC root – V*w*), and the reading of the main sign as **K'AM** or **CH'AM** seems well established from other examples.[30] The only questionable feature of this verb is the suffix representing three small circles, which I tentatively analyze as a morphemic sign for the third person absolutive plural suffix *-oob*, used to mark the direct object of the verb.[31] It remains very possible, however, that this sign is simply the syllabic ending **-ma** (see Grube 1987), used as a complement to the **K'AM** or **CH'AM** logogram. The things or thing "taken" in this episode should be given immediately after this verb at O4 and P4, but these are very difficult to understand. The first of these is the "Starry Deer Crocodile" head sign prefixed by **ya-**, suggesting perhaps a fuller reading **ya-AHIN**, "his/her/its crocodile." However, as discussed in consideration of Passages S-1 and S-2, the **AHIN** reading seems more fitting for another crocodile head showing crossed-bands in its eye; there is a clear iconographic distinction between the two creatures. The Starry Deer Crocodile is otherwise a head variant for **EK'**, "star," but here this value seems doubtful given the prefix.

The second glyph, at P4, is a new example of a glyph that is a general reference to litters or palanquin-like structures depicted in the wooden lintels of Tikal (Martin 1996). It is often quite abstract looking, yet in several examples, including this one from Palenque, the glyph is clearly a depiction of a masonry throne topped by an element resembling the **AJAW** superfix. I do not believe this upper element is **AJAW**, however, for it has a distinctive form in early examples, before it came to be graphically blended with T168. The upper left portion of this superfix resembles the "po" sign, which we often find as "pillows" in throne representations in Maya art (Lounsbury 1989). The glyph at P4 may therefore be a completely iconic representation of a bench-throne topped with such a "po"

[30] My reading of this verb as **K'AM** or **CH'AM** has not been completely presented in published form. It was first proposed in a letter to Stephen Houston dated September 2, 1988.

[31] My analysis of this three-circle element as a plural suffix **–OOB** was presented during the 1999 Maya Meetings at Texas, as part of a larger presentation on Classic Mayan verb morphology by Stephen Houston, John Roberston, and the author. Other possible examples are given in the workbook, but it is important to stress that the plural interpretation remains unproved and is in need of further testing.

pillow and a back-cushion (the element at upper right). The reading of this complex sign is uncertain, but it is unlikely to be a logogram for *tem*, a word for "throne" or "bench" that is already attested in syllabic forms **te-mu** and **te-ma** (Houston, personal communication 1990). However one is to read the "throne" logogram, its final consonant is certainly *-t*, as indicated by the customary **-ta** suffix found in numerous other examples. Using this clue, Wagner (1995) has proposed a value **PAT** for the palanquin glyph, but I think another value is more likely.

The reference to a crocodile in the preceding glyph block is curious, but it seems possible that these two glyphs at O4 and P4 might together refer to the cosmological imagery found with thrones and scaffolds in some examples of Maya art, including the "niche stelae" at Piedras Negras, among others (Figure 62). As we have seen, these images consistently depict a ruler on a pillow seat within a scaffold that is decorated in part with the Starry Deer Crocodile, always shown just below the ruler's seat. Moreover, the niche stelae at Piedras Negras were erected to celebrate the first major Period Ending in the reigns of the local rulers (Proskouriakoff 1960), and this is precisely the temporal setting of this "receiving" event at Palenque. It is tempting to suppose further that glyphs P3 through P4 provide a verbal counterpart to those Piedras Negras scenes, where the rulers "take the crocodile throne" on the occasion of their first Period Ending ceremony. I should stress, however, that such a translation is tentative, and that the **ya-** prefix may well indicate that this statement includes an embedded possessive statement ("the 'x' of the throne?").

The following three glyphs of this passage, from O5 through P6, comprise a dependent phrase introduced by the familiar glyph **yi-chi-NAL-la**, probably reading *y-ich-(V)n-al*, "together with" or "in the presence of" (D. Stuart 1997:10). We then find the three



Figure 62. "Crocodile throne" from Piedras Negras, Stela 6 (drawing by David Stuart from Stuart and Graham 2003:36).

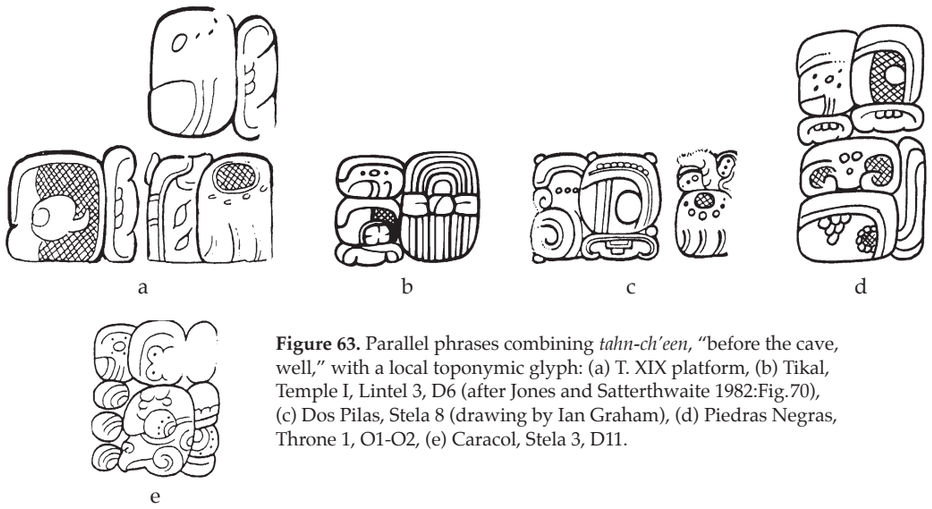


Figure 63. Parallel phrases combining *tahn-ch'een*, "before the cave, well," with a local toponymic glyph: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) Tikal, Temple I, Lintel 3, D6 (after Jones and Satterthwaite 1982:Fig.70), (c) Dos Pilas, Stela 8 (drawing by Ian Graham), (d) Piedras Negras, Throne 1, O1-O2, (e) Caracol, Stela 3, D11.

names of the individual Triad members, GI, GII, and GIII, the gods who were "present" for the ceremony just described in the previous few glyphs. This combination of a "taking" event with references to gods being "present," either in figurative or effigy form, is found in a great many texts at Palenque and beyond. In the inscription of the Palace Tablet, the youthful K'inich K'an Joy Chitam "receives the snake-rope in the presence of" the Triad gods (see Figure 33). Panel 2 from Piedras Negras holds a similar reference to the taking of a helmet in the presence of a set of deities (Fitzsimmons 1998). It would seem that the ritual taking or receiving of ritual objects often involves the "presence" of gods, who could in fact be the "givers" of these important ceremonial accoutrements. I suspect that the Temple XIX platform tells us that K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb received his crocodile-throne from the Triad gods, or at least with their holy sanction.

The very last glyphs of Passage S-8 and the entire south panel hold a simple statement, but its implications for understanding Temple XIX and its significance are far reaching. The glyphs, beginning at O7, read **u-ti-ya TAHN-na CH'EEN-na LAKAM-HA'**, for *ut-iiy tahn ch'een Lakamha'*, "it happened before the spring of Lakamha'." The name Lakamha' seems to have been the ancient toponym for Palenque proper, cited in numerous texts throughout the site (Stuart and Houston 1994:30-31). Its literal meaning is "large waters" or "wide waters," and it is likely in reference to the Río Otolum that passes through the very center of Palenque before spreading among extensive cascades on the hillside below. Immediately before this place name in the text is the so-called "impinged bone" sign, which I have suggested recently has the reading **CH'EEN**, "cave, well," or "spring" (Vogt and Stuart 2000). In this setting, in combination with the preposition *tahn-*, "within" or "before," the *ch'een* surely refers to the spring which is the source of the Otolum, located immediately behind Temple XIX. In inscriptions at other sites, a similar phrase with different place names probably refers to important ritual locations or even bodies of water (Figure 63b-d). Thus the full phrase *tahn-ch'een Lakamha'* is an explicit statement of Temple XIX's location: "before the Lakamha' spring." In its wider context, this closing phrase perhaps describes the setting of the Period Ending ritual described in Passage S-8, or, alternatively, it may serve to orient the larger religious narrative of the platform toward this sacred locale within the ancient city.

The placement of Temple XIX at the Otolum spring was clearly intentional. From what we understand of caves and springs in Maya religion and cosmology, it is likely that the spring was a natural feature of considerable ritual importance within the ancient community that derived its name from the stream emanating from it (Vogt and Stuart 2000). I believe the entire complex of buildings constructed to the north of Temple XIX, including the three Cross Group temples, was oriented near that spring for such reasons. A detailed discussion of this interpretation will be given in Chapter 4, as we place the Temple XIX inscription in it larger mythological and ceremonial context.

II. The West Panel

The shorter west side of the Temple XIX platform also bears a sculpted panel, with a simpler figural scene in relief and an accompanying hieroglyphic text. There is no direct continuation between the south and west inscriptions; rather, the sides stand as two self-contained monuments that were nonetheless conceived and designed together. The scene on the west side is in some ways complementary to that of the south, with a focus on the Palenque Triad but in a more historical and ritual setting. Here the concern with mythical history gives way to more direct dedicatory statements about the platform itself and also certain architectural spaces associated with each of the Triad members, placing these events within the historical framework of Palenque's more contemporary dynastic history.

With its three simply dressed figures, the scene on the west side is a far less busy image. Again symmetry is a key component, showing the three figures arranged in such a way as to vaguely resemble the "tri-figure" composition found on many Palenque tablets. The central portrait is perhaps the oddest of the group, if not of the entire temple. The man is seated before a throne cushion and cradles in his arm a massive bundle of coiled rope. He gestures with his other hand to his left, towards another seated figure who faces him, while the third figure in the scene inexplicably faces away.

The inscription consists of sixty-four glyph blocks, evenly divided into flanking sections of thirty-two each. Six discrete passages make up the main text, labelled here as Passages W-1, W-2, etc., through W-6. Once again the people of the scene are named with captions, ranging in length from three to four and five blocks, respectively.

Passage W-1 (Figure 64)

Summary: The platform's west panel opens with an early Period Ending date 9.6.7.0.0, on which occurred the building or fashioning of a monument (*okib*) associated with one Yax Itzam Aat, the possible great-grandfather of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. The monument's dedication was consecrated by the casting and burning of incense by the then-ruler, K'an Joy Chitam.

The west inscription opens with the Calendar Round notation 7 Ajaw 8 K'ayab at A1 and B1. The placement of this date in the Long Count would be a bit uncertain were it not for the next glyph (A2) written **7-ku-lu-TUUN-ni**, a variant of a well known Period Ending phrase in the inscriptions of Palenque that refers to the number of "stones" (*tuun*, corresponding to a single 360-day period) marked within a K'atun (that is, twenty *tuuns*, or 7,200 days). According to the familiar pattern, the specified number should correspond to the third position of the Long Count, the remaining two (the Winal and K'in) set at zero. The only Long Count date that would agree with the information provided in the first three glyphs is 9.6.7.0.0 7 Ajaw

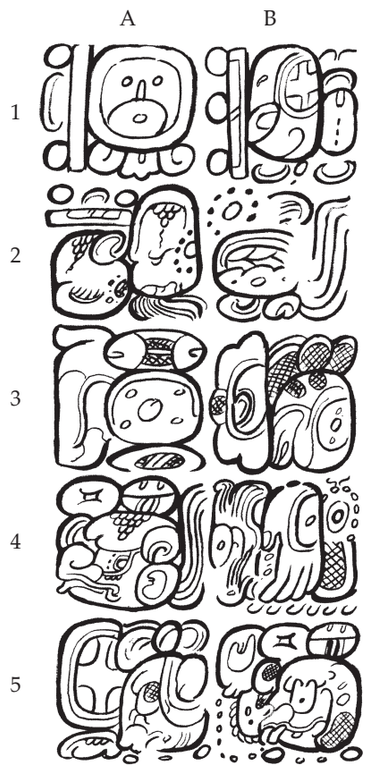


Figure 64. Temple XIX platform, Passage W-1.

8 K'ayab, which we will see is confirmed through the calendrical calculations specified later in the text.

A curious feature of the "seven stones" reference at A2 is the sign inserted between the number prefix and the **TUUN-ni**. This is a conflation of the syllables **ku** and **lu**, and its placement there would suggest its role as a numerical classifier. We find in Moran's Ch'olti' grammar the citation of the classifier *-kul*, used for counting eggs, which may be related to the Classical Yucatec *-kul* classifier, used for counting "*montones de piedra o tierra*" (Barrera Vázquez et al. 1980:348). Here the sense seems to be a reckoning of seven individual stones, however, which would be more in keeping with the Ch'olti' usage (eggs and stones are conceptually related in numerous Mayan languages, as shown by Ch'ol *tun*, "egg"). The glyph at A2 would therefore read in full *wuk-kul-tuun*, "(it is) seven stones," referring to the ritual stones gathered in some manner to symbolize the seventh year of the current K'atun (9.6.7.0.0). Together with the opening date we can read the statement as "(it is) 7 Ajaw 8 K'ayab, (it is) the seven stones."

The event for this passage is **PAT-wa-ni**, written at B2. This is for *pat-wan-ø*, "it is shaped, built," and the subject comes in the following glyph. In parallel examples from other texts at Palenque and elsewhere the subject of this verb is often *y-otot*, "his/her house," *y-eh<u>b</u>*, "his/her steps," or some other architectural term (D. Stuart 1998a), and indeed the glyph at A3 looks to be a possessed noun of some sort: **yo-ko-bi-li**, possibly for *y-ok(i)b-il*, or "his *okib*." Presumably this refers to a sort of monument or construction, and there is a good possibility that it refers to the platform itself (such self-referential aspects of dedicatory texts are commonplace). The precise meaning of *okib* is difficult to ascertain, but the noun looks to be an instrumental, with the suffix *-ib* or -V*b* deriving a noun of instrument from a transitive or intransitive verb root. If so, the noun would in effect be "the instrument for doing the act of *ok*." Curiously, no such verb root exists in Ch'olan languages, nor in Greater Tzeltalan. The only real possibility is the Yucatecan intransitive root *ok*, "enter," descended from proto-Mayan **oq*. The instrumental noun *okib* is not an attested form in Yucatecan to my knowledge, but we do find the possibly related form in Greater Tzeltalan *ochib*, meaning "entrance,

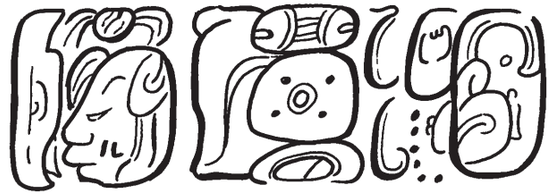


Figure 65. Mention of a *y-ok(i)b-il* object on the platform of Temple XXI, from the upper horizontal text.

doorway" (or more literally, "a thing used for entering"). The vexing problem, however, is that *och* is repeatedly given as the Classic Mayan form of "enter," and two clear examples will soon come up later in this text (in Passages W-3 and W-5). The expected instrumental noun would therefore be *ochib*, but this is not what we find spelled at A2.

As we have seen, other glyphs in the Temple XIX texts exhibit a similar unexpected use of /k/ or /k'/ in place of /ch/ or /ch'/. In a few examples, the verb for "take" or "receive" is spelled **k'a-ma** (*k'am*) (see Figure 18), whereas we find *ch'am* at nearby Piedras Negras and Yaxchilan. Similarly, Palenque scribes regularly chose to spell the word for "earth" as **ka-ba** for *kab*, in lieu of the Ch'olan pronunciation *chab*. Enough evidence is now at hand to suggest that the regular and expected phonological shift from /k/ and /k'/ to /ch/ and /ch'/ was not consistently indicated in hieroglyphic spellings. This may reflect a local Palenque resistance to this sound change due to its proximity to Yucatecan speakers, much the way modern Chontal retains *kab* for "earth" (see Kaufman and Norman 1984). One could surmise that *okib*, if meaning "entrance," is another such example, which for some reason was resistant to the phonological shift seen in its original root *och*.

The other possible etymology of *okib* derives from the noun for "foot," *ok*. This is a well-attested lexeme in Classic inscriptions, but it may seem somewhat odd to have an instrumental noun like *okib* derived from another noun. One slightly different usage of -V*b* suffixes in Mayan languages is on nouns of place (as in Tzotzil *ocheb ha'*, "place where water enters"), suggesting that *ok-Vb* might be better analyzed as "place for the foot," or "pedestal." There is a strong likelihood that the possessed noun *y-ok(i)b-il* mentioned in this passage refers to a small platform-like construction like that within Temple XIX and also Temple XXI, where, as it happens, the same *y-ok(i)b-il* term appears in a probable dedicatory setting (Figure 65). We will find in discussions to come that the ultimate date of this text, apparently its dedicatory date, also features the same object type called an *okib*, in association with a different verb. If y-*ok(i)b-il* there refers to the platform itself, then this reference in Passage W-1 must be to another earlier platform of similar type, given the 9.6.7.0.0 date.

The personal name phrase after *y-ok(i)b-il* occupies the next two glyph blocks at A3 and B4. It is not the name of a Palenque king, but rather of another early personage in Palenque history. The first of the name glyphs is **YAX-ITZAM?-AAT** and lastly the title **TUUN-ni-AJAW**.[32] A very similar name appears on the north sanctuary jamb panel of the Temple of the Sun, where it follows a parentage statement for the ruler K'inich Kan Bahlam (Figure 66). There, after the record of the mother's name (Ix Tz'ak Ajaw,[33] the spouse of K'inich Janab Pakal), we encounter the relationship glyph I have read as **U-MAM-ma**, for *u-mam*, "his

[32] The putative **ITZAM** value for the hairnet commonly found with God N is based on several lines of evidence, as outlined in correspondence with Linda Schele in 1992. It is not a thoroughly secure reading but still seems a promising lead.

[33] The mother is named "Lady Ahpo Hel" in many earlier studies. The reading here—Ix Tz'ak Ajaw—is based upon more acceptable values for the constituent signs of the name.



Figure 66. Caption text from the north sanctuary panel, Temple of the Sun, Palenque (drawing by Lucia Henderson).

maternal grandfather." After this comes the name **YAX-ITZAM?-ti TUUN-AJAW-wa**, almost certainly referring to the same individual we find in the Temple XIX inscription. Only the penis sign (**AAT**) seems to be omitted here, although its presence, perhaps conflated in some way with the God N head, is indicated by the **-ti** suffix. Two glyphs accompanying the grandfather's name are **o-ki-bi** and **AJ-3-K'UH**, which also occur together in the platform text of Temple XIX, in the name caption of the central figure on the west side (glyphs L and M). In the text from the Temple of the Sun, *u-mam* serves to extend the record of K'inich Kan Bahlam's kin relations beyond the simpler and more common citations of the father and mother. If the *mam* reading is correct, the implication is that Yax Itzam Aat is that ruler's maternal grandfather, or Ix Tz'ak Ajaw's father.

This identification of the grandfather would just fit with the opening date of Episode W-1, or 9.6.7.0.0 7 Ajaw 8 K'ayab. We lack precise dates for the lifespan of Ix Tz'ak Ajaw, but we know she was at least a young adult when K'inich Kan Bahlam was born on 9.10.2.6.6. If for argument's sake we take twenty to have been close to her minimum age at giving birth, then her own birth would have fallen a K'atun earlier, around 9.9.3.0.0 or so. The opening date of Passage W-1 is in turn some four decades prior to this, but it is conceivable that her father would have been old enough to officiate at that time.

If I am correct in linking the name in Passage W-1 to the grandfather of K'inich Kan Bahlam (and therefore perhaps the great-grandfather of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb), then we are still left to consider his historical identity and connections to the Palenque polity. The title accompanying both citations of the name is Tuun Ajaw, "Stone Lord," and it possibly serves as an Emblem Glyph for this individual, even if lacking the usual "holy" prefix. However, I do not know of any other names from Palenque or any other site that carry such an emblem—it seems unique to this individual. It is also curious that his daughter Ix Tz'ak Ajaw seems to have an Emblem Glyph of her own (Tz'ak Ajaw) that is altogether different.[34] We can at least surmise from his title that, wherever he came from, he was not a "Holy Lord." Presumably he was a political subordinate within Palenque itself or perhaps within Palenque's greater domain.

[34] Most spellings of her emblem name are simply **IX-TZ'AK-AJAW**, yet we find on the Dumbarton Oaks tablet from the Palenque region the addition of the sign **-bu**, in **IX-TZ'AK-bu-AJAW**. The combination **TZ'AK-bu** is familiar from numbered successor titles found at many sites (Riese 1984), and it is possible that here and in other settings the **-bu** serves as a causative derivational ending on a positional root. However, I am at a loss to explain how such a derived verb stem would work as an Emblem Glyph.



Figure 67. Portrait of K'an Joy Chitam, from the sarcophagus of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque (drawing by Merle Greene Robertson).

Passage W-1 continues at block B4 with a new verb introducing a "secondary" or dependent statement. Such constructions are common in Maya texts, and they elaborate on some aspect of the preceding sentence by introducing a new but closely related event and actor. On the other side of the platform, in Passage S-1, we saw the use of the verb *u-kab-j-iiy* in a similar type of role, there specifying the actor who "oversaw" the accession of GI. Here the event is the "scattering" ritual, a transitive verb perhaps based on the root *chok*, "to throw." The main sign of the verb is the familiar "casting hand," followed by the element **ch'a**, used to spell the direct object of the verb, *ch'aaj*, "incense." A question concerning this glyph, however, concerns the role of the final **-ji** sign. In many examples of the scattering glyph the **-ji** suffix has been thought to complete the syllabic spelling of *ch'aaj* (**ch'a-ji**), but the **-ji** sign is also well established as a common suffix on transitive verbs in such secondary positions (such as **U-KAB-ji**). The **-ji** element here occupies a large space underneath the grouping of the casting hand and the **ch'a** signs, suggesting, if only slightly, that it is more than a simple spelling of **ch'a-ji** (were this the case, the **-ji** would probably be reduced in size and placed only below the **ch'a**). For the moment I prefer to see *ch'aaj* as incorporated into a verb with the sense of "incense-scatters" or "censes," and to see this scattering verb as a member of the aforementioned class of secondary transitives, where the direct object is understood as having been previously stated. The precise role of **-ji** on certain transitive verbs is currently being debated, yet it may be related to the suffix *-ej* found in Tojolabal as a marker for derived transitive verbs. Historical linguistics will resolve this issue in time, but I would hazard to guess that the sense of the text here is that "he incense-scatters (upon) it" or "he censes it," the object being the *okib* of the main clause or else the fashioning (*pat-w-an*) event itself.

Whatever the nature of this scattering ritual, the main performer is named as the early Palenque ruler K'an Joy Chitam, whose name glyph appears at A5. This king is known from

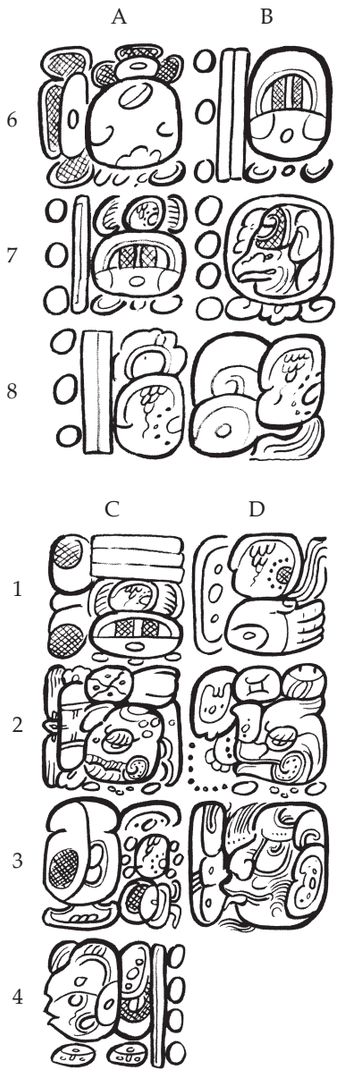


Figure 68. Temple XIX platform, Passage W-2.

other references in the Temples of the Cross and Inscriptions, including an ancestral portrait on the sarcophagus of Pakal (Figure 67). The Tablet of the Cross records his accession date on 9.4.14.10.4 5 K'an 12 K'ayab, and the Temple of the Inscriptions sarcophagus notes his death on 9.6.11.0.16 7 Kib 4 K'ayab. The rite recorded on the Temple XIX platform therefore occurred very late in his reign, only a few years before his passing. I take this final sentence within Passage W-1 as a record of the king's sanctioning or consecration of the *okib* as an active participant in its dedication, even though the monument is said to be owned by another individual. To anticipate our later findings, we will see that the final passage of the west side replicates these first statements in many ways, discussing another ritual concerning an *okib* and the involvement once again of a royal "scattering" rite.

Passage W-2 (Figure 68)

Summary: The narrative arrives at contemporary history by citing the Period Ending 9.15.0.0.0 4 Ajaw 13 Yax, celebrated by the "stone binding" ritual of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. A secondary passage is enigmatic, referring to the "first" occurrence of an event involving the god GI and another participant with the name Salaj Bolon.

Blocks A6 through A7 hold a Distance Number of 8.13.0.0, which when added to the preceding 9.6.7.0.0 leads to the K'atun ending 9.15.0.0.0 4 Ajaw 13 Yax. This Calendar Round is written next at B7 and A8, bringing us into the contemporary history of Late Classic Palenque and its ruler, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. The common K'atun-ending phrase **CHUM-TUUN-ni**, or *chum-tuun*, "(it is) the stone seating," comes at B8, followed in turn at C1 by **U-15-WINIKHAAB?,** "(it is) the fifteenth 'K'atun'."

Period Ending records often contain strings of similar descriptive statements, but a more personal event is recorded in the next glyph (D1): **U-K'AL-TUUN-ni**, *u-k'al-tuun*, "(it is) his stone-binding," a reference to a ubiquitous calendar ritual conducted by Maya lords on major Period Endings and very likely related in its concepts to the well known Mexica Aztec ceremony known as the *xiuhmohpilli*, or "binding of the years (or precious stones)" (D. Stuart 1996). The actor in this case is the reigning king of Palenque, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, named at C2. His royal title at D2 is **K'UHUL-MAT-la-AJAW**, *K'uhul Matwil Ajaw*, "the Holy Matwil Lord." This isolated use of the

Matwil Emblem Glyph for the king is significant, for it provides an interesting contrast with the more conventional Baakal emblem title carried by K'an Joy Chitam in the preceding passage, as well as by himself near the end of the inscription on the south face of the platform.

The record of the K'atun ending 9.15.0.0.0 4 Ajaw 13 Yax is the third known mention of that date at Palenque, the earliest appearing on the Tablet of the Slaves at M3-N3. That reference is anticipatory, however, since the tablet was dedicated on an earlier date, 9.14.18.9.8 5 Lamat 6 Wo. The other mention of the K'atun ending is on the partially preserved *alfarda* tablet of Temple XIX, which is only implied by a Distance Number linking 9.15.0.0.0 to a later date (one that is repeated, in fact, in Passage W-3 of this inscription). The two records of 9.15.0.0.0 from Temple XIX stand as the only contemporary accounts of the Period Ending and the rituals that celebrated it.

The remaining three glyphs of Passage W-2 are highly unusual but may offer more detailed information about the rites associated with the K'atun ending. Glyph C3 has two parts: **U-NAAH** and **U-?-tu**. The first of these is readily understood as an ordinal construction *u-naah...*, "its first...," yet the spelling here is unusual compared to others found at Palenque and elsewhere.[35] This adverbial modifier precedes the curious spelling **U-?-tu**, the central unknown sign being T174, whose reading has proved difficult to determine, with varied proposals offered over the past decade or so. One possible value is **KUCH**, "carry," which was considered independently by Macleod (personal communication 1993) and the author in 1993. Another reading I have more recently entertained is **HACH**, "to raise, lift."[36] The **-tu** suffix would be difficult to explain in combination with such verb roots, however. We will see a very similar construction further along in this text on the western side of the platform.

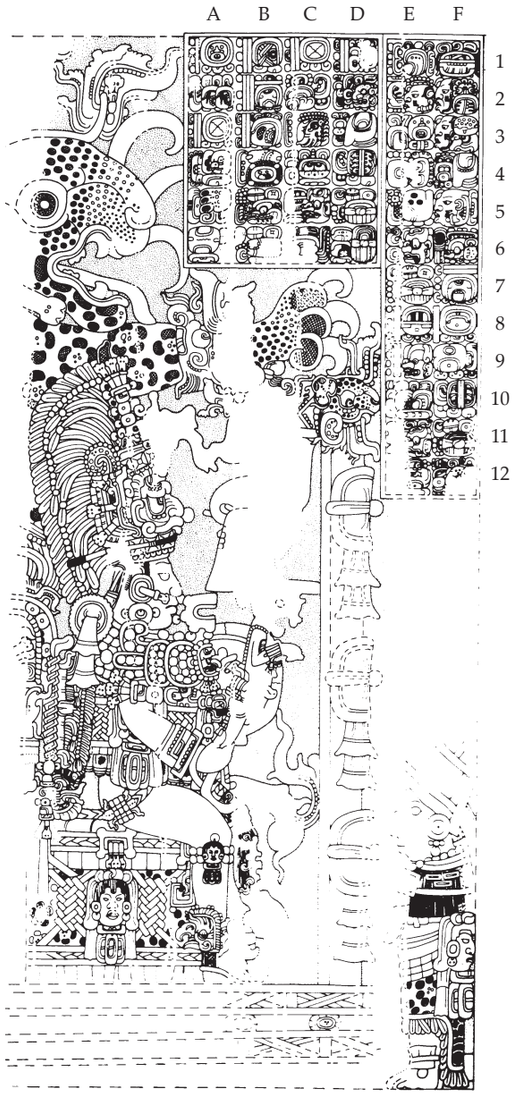
In combination with *u-naah*, "the first," the glyph **U-HACH?-tu** is most likely a nominalized form of a verb found in several inscriptions beyond Palenque, spelled **HACH?-ta-ja**. The clearest and most revealing cases of this glyph appear on Lintel 3 of Temple I at Tikal (Figure 69), where it appears to refer to the parading of rulers and effigies in elaborate palanquins (Martin 1996). Other cases are attested at Naranjo and Caracol. The spelling **HACH?-ta-ja** might be interpreted as *hach-t-aj*, "he/she/it is lifted," an appropriate description of the palanquin event.[37]

Returning to the Temple XIX text, we find in D3 a glyph with the preposition **TA-** preceding the portrait head of the deity GI. The *ta-* may well be related to the preposition found on deity names following the similar verbal expression at Tikal, just discussed. Although GI is named at D3, the presentation is notably different from the citations of GI we have already seen on the south panel and in other Palenque inscriptions. Both individually and as a member of the Palenque Triad, GI's name is customarily written with the portrait head prefixed by

[35] Other examples of this adverbial phrase often are spelled **U-NAAH-hi**, as we have seen in the stucco text from Temple XIX (see also a stucco glyph from Temple XVIII [no.430 in Schele and Mathews 1979]). The large **U**- main sign in the Temple XIX example lends it a very different look, but structurally it is identical.

[36] Lacadena (personal communication 1999) considers **MAY** or **K'ECH** as possibilities. I will discuss the evidence behind the **HACH**, "raise, lift," reading of T174 in a separate study now under preparation.

[37] One may wonder what role the *-t-* morpheme plays in the possible reading *hach-t-aj*. Most verbs with the *-aj* suffix are derived as passives from CVC transitive roots, but here *hach-t-* may be a rare example of a transitive stem derived from a positional root, *hach*. The *-t* ending is a common transitivizing morpheme in Mayan languages, probably related historically to the locative preposition *ti-* or *ta-*. A close parallel exists in modern Ch'ol (Tumbala dialect) where *-tä* (sixth vowel) derives transitive stems from positional roots, for example *buch*, "seated" > *buch-tä*, "to sit upon" (Feldman 1986). I therefore analyze the passive form *hach-t-aj-ø* (here with the person marker indicated) as "he is lifted upon."





HACH?-ta-ja tu-?-BAHLAM-ma-NAL

Figure 69. The verb *hach-t-aj* or *kuch-t-aj* associated with a palanquin, on Tikal, Temple I, Lintel 3 (from Jones and Satterthwaite 1982:Fig.70).

the numeral "1" and two other unreadable signs. Here on the west panel, and more than once as we shall see, the initial glyph before the portrait head is not present. Why it is different here I cannot say, except to speculate that this is an "aspect" of GI more specific than his general "proper" name.

The next block at C4 is a curious grouping of signs with a numerical suffix: **sa-ja-la-9.** It is in all likelihood a personal name for a historical figure previously unseen in Palenque's inscriptions, for we find it cited in the figure caption for the central portrait depicted in the accompanying scene on the west side (blocks J1 and K1). We will find the same name also mentioned a bit later in Passage W-4 at E4, as well as on the platform of Temple XXI. Curiously in all three of these other cases, the name appears as **sa-la-ja-9**, strongly suggesting that the proper reading of the name is *Salaj Bolon*. His identity will be discussed at more length in Chapter 3, but suffice it to say here that he is likely to be a close kin relation of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb.

When considered with the verbal expression at C3, the final three glyphs of Passage W-2 may describe a specific ritual occasion associated with the 9.15.0.0.0 K'atun ending, namely the "first lifting" or "raising" of the god GI, or some aspect of that deity, probably as an effigy figure. The relationship of the **sa-ja-la-9** portion of the name phrase to the central figure of the scene may suggest that the god was impersonated by a human actor, perhaps even the ruler himself, a scenario that would be in keeping with the more explicit theme of god-impersonation as presented in the scene and inscription of the south panel.

Passage W-3 (Figure 70)

Summary: The third passage records a "fire-entering" (building dedication) ritual two years later, on 9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 K'ayab. This date is featured in other texts of Temple XIX and concerns a structure or shrine associated with GI, probably Temple XIX itself.

A short interval of 2.7.16 reckons forward from the K'atun ending to 9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 K'ayab, recorded as a calendar round at D6 and C7. Before we discuss the events associated with this day, we should first pause to consider the unusual form of the Distance Number Introducing Glyph back at D4. This shows a unique replacement for the customary **TZ'AK** main sign (a reading discussed in Reise 1984), a pairing of the color signs "green/blue" (**YAX**) with "yellow" (**K'AN**). Clearly this juxtaposition of colors is related to the use of two contrasting elements as an ideographic conveyance of the term **TZ'AK**, which is based on the meaning of "whole" or "complete" (Reise 1984; D. Stuart 2003a). Other examples of paired **TZ'AK** variants occur in the texts of many sites (Figure 71), and several appear in the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs at Palenque, an inscription that in size, style and presentation is descended from the artistry behind the Temple XIX platform. There we find such pairings as "wind-water," "moon-star," and "day-night." Other Maya inscriptions include pairings such as "food-drink" or "cloud-water." Often we have considered these unusual glyphs to be prime examples of "paired opposites" in the Levi-Strauss vein, but I believe it is more correct to interpret them as complementary pairings that convey a whole idea or concept. Hence they serve to represent the notion of *tz'ak*, "whole." In the Distance Number Introducing Glyph, *tz'ak* presumably refers to the entirety of time that elapses from one date to another. Thus "wind-water" conveys the characteristics of storms (perhaps better read as "wind-rain"), "moon-star" the major aspects of the night sky, and "day-night" the dual conditions of the "whole" sky. In Temple XIX's inscription, the grouping "green-yellow" almost certainly refers to the life cycle of edible plants, with the more direct meaning of "unripe-ripe." *Yax* can mean "unripe" in several Mayan languages, just as the color green does in numerous other tongues,

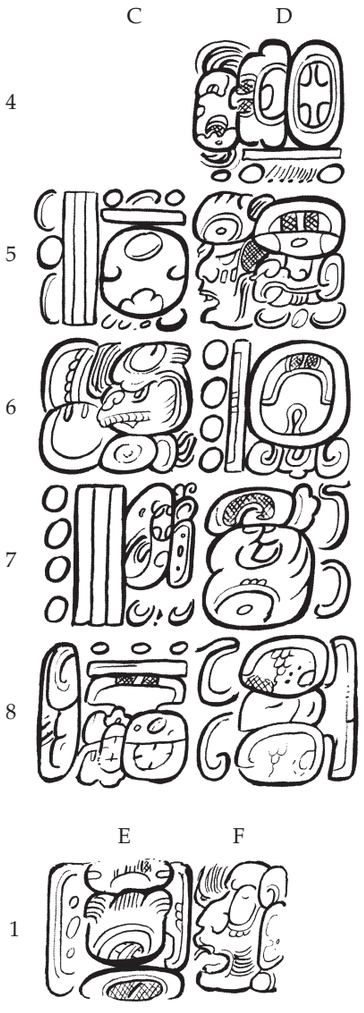


Figure 70. Temple XIX platform, Passage W-3.

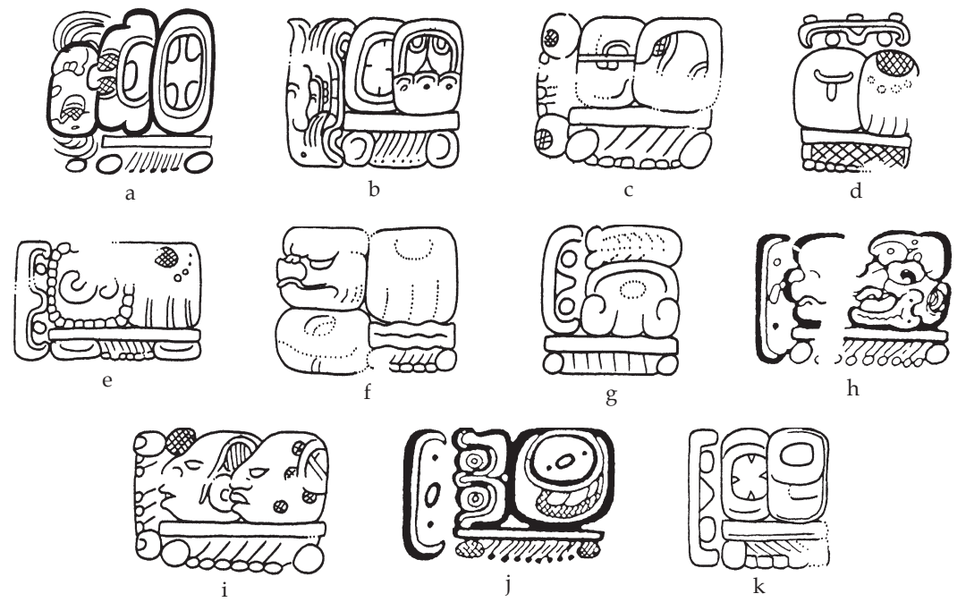


Figure 71. Assorted examples of "paired opposites" used as composite logograms of **TZ'AK**, in the Distance Number Introducing Glyph: (a) T.XIX platform, west, D4, (b) Palenque, Bodega no.208, (c) Copan, Temple XI, east door, south panel, B4, (d) Copan, HS1, Step 53, (e) Copan, Temple XI, east door, north panel, C1, (f) Copan, HS1, Step 42, (g) Tonina, M.20, D1, (h) Palenque, 96 Glyphs, D8 (drawing by Linda Schele), (i) Copan, Temple XI, east door, south panel, A1, (j) Palenque, 96 Glyphs, E7 (drawing by Linda Schele), (k) Zacpeten, Altar 1, A1.

and *k'an*, "yellow," is a specific term for "ripe." In modern Q'eq'chi, the combined term *raxal-k'anal* signifies "abundance" (Haeserijn 1979:282). It is important to emphasize, however, that this and other sign pairings are not to be read phonetically as two constituent parts (*yax k'an*, etc.) but rather as ideographic representations of the concept of "wholeness" and "completion." They are all therefore **TZ'AK** forms.

Returning to the passage associated with the day 9 Kib 19 K'ayab, we find the verb at D7 written **OCH-chi-K'AHK'**, for *och k'ahk'*, "the fire enters." I have suggested elsewhere that this is an important way of describing the dedication or "activation" of an architectural space, related to some modern Maya burning rites associated with the dedication of houses (D. Stuart 1998a). In such hieroglyphic expressions the following glyph is very often a proper name for the architectural space being dedicated, which here appears in block C8. The first of these begins with the preposition **TA**-, here for *ta*- "into," signaling the direction of the fire-entering ritual. The remainder of the glyph at C8 is the odd combination of **8-NAAH-K'INICH-EL?**, where *naah* presumably means "house" or "structure." Although seemingly placed in the middle of the sequence, there is ample precedent to suggest that *-naah* is to be read in final position, due to the graphical superimposition of signs. The full verb phrase *och-k'ahk' ta-waxak-k'inich-el-naah* refers to the entering of fire into a building (or buildings) with the possible name "Eight Great Sun Emergence House(s)." The term is very reminiscent of another house name cited in the main inscription of the Tablet of the Cross, spelled **8-NAAH**-"GI," possibly meaning "the eight 'GI' houses" (Figure 72). I doubt these are the same architectural names, but they probably bear a close connection to one another.

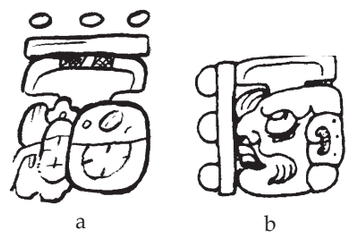


Figure 72. A comparison of architectural names associated with GI at Palenque: (a) T. XIX, (b) Tablet of the Cross (drawing by Linda Schele).

The glyph at D8 also is a proper name for a building, but it is not a continuation of the name mentioned in the preceding glyph. Between C8 and D8 we have a discursive break, after a general record of the fire-entering ritual, where a new sentence begins, once more naming a specific building and its relationship to the deity GI. D8 names this building or space, written as **K'AHK'-?-NAAH**, "the Fire ..?.. House." It is very hard to discern the middle sign (or signs), but the upper and lower portions of the intervening element resemble certain "kawak" forms; I am not sure how they should best be analyzed. The opening glyph of the right section, at E1, continues the dedication statement of Passage W-2, linking the structure name at D8 to the god. The glyph is a possessed noun phrase **U-CHAK-?-NAAH-li**, *u-chak-..?..-naah-il*, "his/its red(?) ..?.. structure." We will find this glyph cited again in this text, in each case before the name of one of the Triad deities (Figure 73). We have already found it written in the incomplete text of the Temple XIX *alfarda* (see Chapter 1), where it followed a dedication event falling on the same date of this passage, 9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 K'ayab. In the *alfarda* inscription the "red ? house" glyph was not a possessed noun, but simply **CHAK-?-NAAH-hi**. The undeciphered middle sign of this noun resembles a tri-lobed "fin" element with crossed bands in its interior. The crossed-bands and fringe-like design recall certain fish-related or at least aquatic iconography, but they do little to suggest an exact reading for the sign.

The position of the "red ? house" glyphs in these two inscriptions suggests that it refers to a class or type of building, possibly an enclosed, interior space of a structure. As noted in Chapter 1, if we compare these passages to similar statements from elsewhere in the Cross Group we find that **CHAK-?-NAAH** occupies the same position as another important

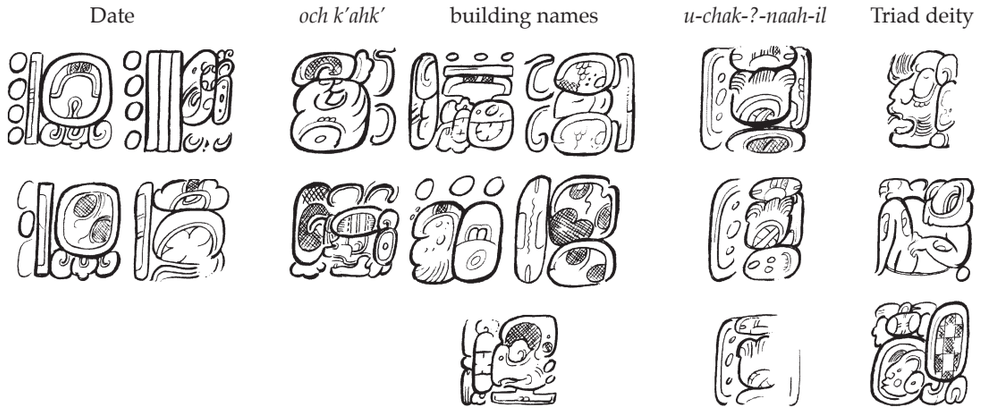


Figure 73. A comparison of the "Red ? House" references in Temple XIX's inscriptions.

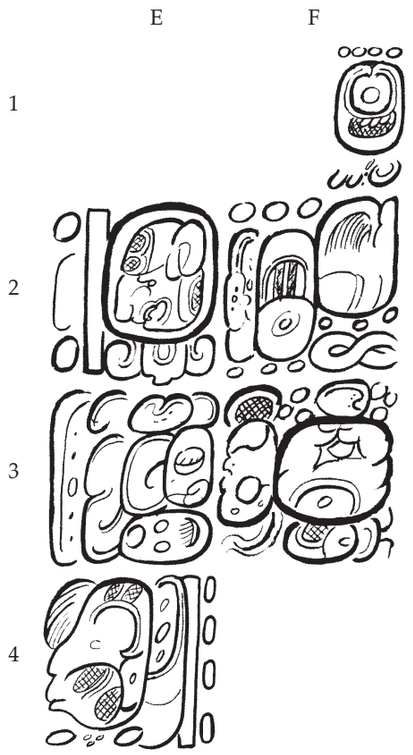


Figure 74. Temple XIX platform, Passage W-4.

architectural term, *pib naah,* used in the texts of the Temples of the Cross, Foliated Cross, and Sun. *Pib naah*, or "pit-oven structure," is a term for the interior sanctuaries of those three temples and perhaps originally a term for a sweat bath (D. Stuart 1987b; Houston 1996). Considering the evident parallels between *pib naah* and *chak ..?.. naah*, it stands to reason that the Temple XIX term in some way names an area or space within the superstructure, if not the building as a whole. We will revisit this question in the conclusions of this study, when we consider the overall inscription in its historical and architectural context.

The owner or protagonist of this space is the god GI, named at F1a with his portrait head only, again lacking the common introductory glyph with the "one" numerical prefix. A similar simplified reference to GI occurred in the earlier passage, where it may have referred to an effigy figure of the deity, and one naturally wonders if the form of the glyphic name here indicates something similar—that the "house" was that of a GI effigy whose hieroglyphic name was in some way distinguished from the GI actor named so prominently in the mythical narrative from the south side of the platform. At the very least we can safely say that Passage W-3 records the dedication of a building or space attributed to GI in some way. We will soon find that other passages in this inscription describe similar structures associated with the other two members of the Palenque Triad.

Passage W-4 (Figure 74)

Summary: Twenty-four days after GI's house ritual, and on the day 9.15.2.9.0 7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb, is a "rope-taking" event associated with half-Hotun periods. This may describe the figural scene on the west panel.

Passage W-4 begins in the second half of block F1, directly after the portrait name of GI, with a Distance Number of 24 days. This is expressed in a somewhat unusual fashion by the use of a "moon" sign for the single Winal (twenty days), to which is superfixed the number four. Although the reading **K'AL** "twenty" is often given to this

moon element, its value remains uncertain; **UJ** "moon, month" is perhaps another possibility well worth considering (Bricker 1986:151-152).

The short span brings the chronology forward to 9.15.2.9.0 7 Ajaw 3 Wayeb, recorded at E2 and F2a. We have already encountered this date in the *alfarda* of Temple XIX, where in a similar way it followed the dedication record on 9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 K'ayab. The same date may also have appeared on the stone panel, in a now-missing section. From the recurring association of the dates, we might surmise that the temple's dedication was somehow closely connected with this featured event occurring a mere twenty-four days later.

The nature of the event was impossible to know from the battered remains of the *alfarda* text, but here at F2b we find a complete verbal statement, even if somewhat difficult to read. The verb is simple in its form, consisting of the signs **k'a-ma** for *k'am,* "take receive," and a "twisted rope" element below. The same combination occurs on the stone and stucco panels from the interior pier of Temple XIX (see Figure 18), and it seems to be a direct description of a ritual that involved the "taking" of some important object. The wider significance of the ceremony is difficult to know, but, as mentioned in Chapter 2, it may well be related to the importance of the 9.15.2.9.0 date as the mid-point of a Hotun, or 5.0.0 period.

E3 is clearly a possessed noun with the *-il* suffix, but I know of no other examples of this unusual grouping of signs. The upper, horizontally oriented element is unique, and below this to the left we see a looping sign almost resembling a portion of folded or twisted cloth. The penultimate sign, before the noun ending, is more recognizable as the syllable **mu**, perhaps serving as a phonetic complement on the unusual sign preceding it. The combination leads me to speculate that the glyph may contain the word *sum* or *suum*, "rope, cord," elaborating in some way the simple "rope-taking" reference in the preceding glyph ("it is the rope-taking, his ..?.. rope…"). Just who or what is meant to be the intended subject is not clear; he may be named somewhat later in E4 or may be understood as the protagonist of the previous passage, the god GI.

F3 repeats a somewhat troublesome glyph found earlier in the inscription, in Passage W-2. This is **U-HACH?-chi-tu**, now with a **chi** sign inserted after the T174 sign and a **-tu** suffix. I feel that **-chi** is likely a phonetic complement to the value of T174, already discussed as a possible positional root **HACH**, "lift, raise," but now as a derived stem with an indication of a "complex" internal vowel (*haach* or *ha-h-ch*). The **-tu** suffix I find very difficult to explain, but it may be used here to represent, at least in part, the transitivizing suffix *-t*. These are tentative assessments, to be sure, but it seems at least reasonable to suppose this glyph specifies some verb ("lifting"?) that gives some context to the "rope-taking" mentioned at the outset.

E4 is most likely a personal name, spelled **sa-ja-la-9** and repeating a glyph encountered earlier in Passage W-2. There the glyph was in a direct association with the god GI, and it is probably significant that here in Passage W-4 the ritual described takes place only days after GI's house dedication. Evidently Salaj Bolon was someone with a strong connection to GI. The name is found also as the name or designation of the central figure on the west side, who holds the large and unusual coil of rope.

From the questions raised by nearly every glyph in this passage, even a loose paraphrase comes with difficulty. "Rope-taking" is the general event, and the three glyphs from E3 through E4 may simply provide more specific information about this general ritual act or occasion. Given the apparent reference to a "rope" and to the name Salaj Bolon, it is likely that this passage is linked more than any other to the scene on the west side of the throne.

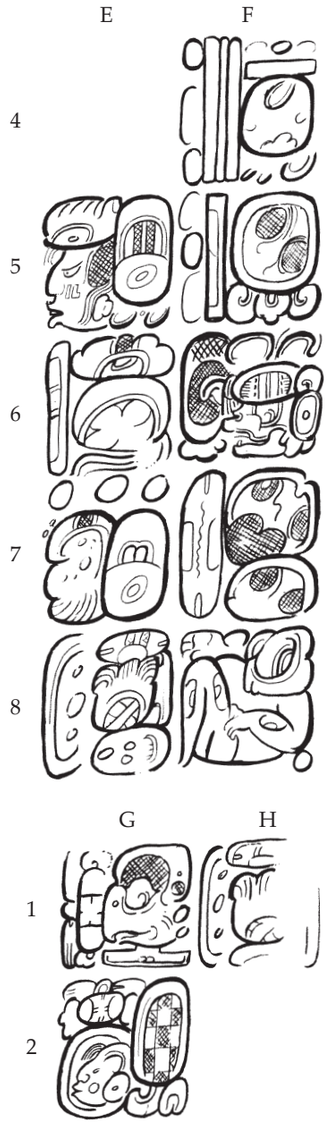


Figure 75. Temple XIX platform, Passage W-5.

Passage W-5 (Figure 75)

Summary: After a span of two years, on 9.15.4.15.17 6 Kaban 5 Yaxk'in, the "red ? houses" of GII and GIII of the Triad are dedicated in an *och-k'ahk'*, "fire-entering," rite. As with GI's similar rite recorded in Passage W-3, each of these houses or spaces has its own proper name.

The next passage carries the narrative forward over two years in time, opening with a Distance Number of 2.6.17 at F4 and E5. This takes us to the date 9.15.4.15.17 6 Kaban 5 Yaxk'in, recorded as a Calendar Round in the subsequent two blocks. The event is once more **OCH-K'AHK'**, "fire-entering," here spelled somewhat differently from what we have already encountered in Passage W-3 (**OCH-chi-K'AHK'**). Here the **chi** hand has been omitted and the **K'AHK'** logograph has been expanded into its well known head variant form, but the verb phrase is essentially identical, referring to the dedication of some sort of architectural space. In both passages the structure is *och-k'ahk'* - PROPER NAME - *u-chak-..?..-naah-il* - GOD'S NAME, or "fire enters the [building name], (it is) the red ..?.. house of [god name]." Passage W-5 in this way expands upon the earlier statement, referring to the dedication of two other "houses" associated with the remaining members of the Palenque Triad, GII and GIII.

Two glyphs at E7 and F7 make up the proper name of the house or some type of architectural space—again we cannot be sure what—that was dedicated on 6 Kaban 5 Yaxk'in. The name is structurally similar to the other building name given at D8. The signs together can be read **3-^{2}jo-lo BAAK-?-KAB**. As with many proper names of structures, this is extremely difficult to translate with any assurance. The two small circles at the upper left of the **jo** look to be a doubling marker indicating *jojol* or just possibly *jolol* (the sign meant to be read twice can at times be spatially removed from the two dots). Interestingly, the root **joj* in proto-Ch'olan is "heron" (Kaufman and Norman 1984), a bird that we have seen has close connections to Temple XIX's inscriptions and symbolism. Here *joj* might possibly be derived as an adjectival form *joj-ol* (Houston, Robertson, and Stuart 2001), modifying the terms in the following glyph block, including the initial **BAAK**, "bone," logogram. An alternative analysis would see the **jo-lo** sequence without a doubler, spelling the word *jol*, "head, skull," and suggesting a connection to the frequent compounded term *baak jolil*, "bones-and-skull," found in several other settings in connection with the ritual use of skeletal remains (Figure 76). The sign following **BAAK** at F7 is a very rare element, making the name all the more problematic for decipherment. A strong parallel can be found on an Early Classic cache vessel from the central Peten region (Figure 77b), where it seems to be combined also with **KAB**. Although the upper element is very strange, it does share internal features with the "kaban" or "earth" motif, and the darkened or hatched area at its lower left corner lends it a strong resemblance, for example, to the image of a subterranean cavity depicted on the lower half of Stela 40 of Piedras Negras. This is probably a representation of an ancestral burial (Hammond 1981). It seems possible that the sign represents a similar kind of burial pit; if so, it may bear a thematic connection to the possible "skull-bone" grouping cited earlier in the same name. Continuing on to the next glyph, we read at E8 that this space or structure is again a *chak-..?..-naah*, the term used to describe GI's "house," dedicated two years previously. In this passage, however, the owner is the god GII, named at the very bottom of column F.

A second part of Passage W-5 commences with yet another proper name of a house at block G1 (not to be confused with the god GI!). This is written **K'INICH-?-NAAH**, the central element being an owl-like bird's head known from several other contexts. The initial term *K'inich*, "Great Sun," is of course a common titular prefix on rulers' names at Palenque, but it need not be restricted to the proper names of people; it appears as a prefix on building names at both Palenque and Yaxchilan (Stuart and Houston 1994). Once more we have the suffix *-naah*, "house," which leaves only the central bird sign to be explained. This element is most commonly found in the Emblem Glyph of Tonina, where it serves as the head variant of the **o** syllable in the grouping **po-o**, for *Po'*, an ethnic term which survived in Chiapas into historical times (Ayala Falcón 1997). In the Palenque text the bird is a logogram of some sort, making its reading a bit problematic.[38]

[38] The bird sign and its possible logographic reading deserve a few more comments. Its identification as an owl seems probable based on iconographic representations of an identical avian creature on pottery. The hieroglyphic name of this bird features its own head—the same sign we have at Palenque—but with the separate suffix **-o**. Given the established syllabic value of the sign as **o** also, I have wondered whether this fantastic owl may be related to the "*oo* bird" mentioned in *The Ritual of the Bacabs* and discussed briefly by Roys (1965). Arzapalo-Marín (1987), in his edition, also notes that *oo* refers to an "especie de pajaro," although the species is unknown. If so, the logographic value might well be **O'** (likely an onomatopoeic name), with the proper name reading *K'inich O' Naah*, "the Great Sun 'Owl' House."



Figure 76. Possible distinct combinations of the terms *jol* ("head, skull") and *baak* ("bone"): (a) T. XIX platform, (b) incised turtle carapace, private collection.

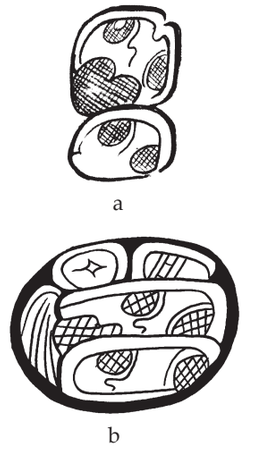


Figure 77. Examples of an unusual logogram or sign combination incorporating "earth": (a) T. XIX platform, (b) cache vessel from the Tikal region.

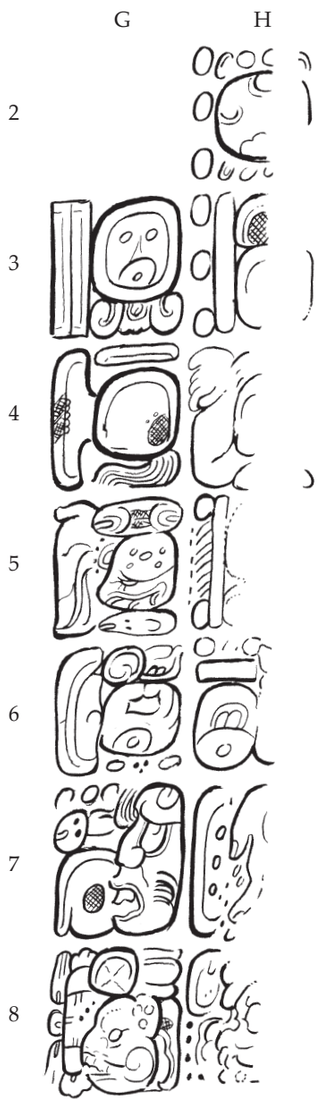


Figure 78.Temple XIX platform, Passage W-6.

As we could have easily anticipated by this point, the "owner" of this third house of the *chak-..?..-naah* type is the deity GIII, named in block G2. The text is clear in stating that the dedications of GII's and GIII's "houses" occurred on the same day, a significant amount of time after GI's own "house" was fire-entered. The reason is unknown, but there can be little doubt that the discrepancy in time reflects GI's seniority among the three Triad members, at least in terms of the narrative of the Temple XIX platform. Temple XIX seems, after all, to be the "red ? house" of GI. Where then are the houses of the other two gods? There may in fact have been just one building encompassing the shrines to GII and GIII, and given its strong similarity to Temple XIX, Temple XXI is very likely to be the companion structure.

Passage W-6 (Figure 78)

Summary: Forty-three days later, on the Period Ending 9.15.5.0.0 10 Ajaw 8 Ch'en, another event occurs concerning an *okib* object or monument. Its owner is not clear, nor is the nature of the event, but it may possibly be in reference to the dedication of the platform monument over two years after Temple XIX's activation. The divine witnesses of the event include GI, and it is sanctioned through the scattering or casting rite of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, ruler of Palenque.

We are now at the close of the West Panel's inscription and, as we shall see, probably also at the final passage of the entire textual program of the monument. The featured date is written at G3 and H3 as 10 Ajaw 8 Ch'en, which falls 2.3 (forty-three days) after the dedicatory events recorded in Passage W-5. This Distance Number is at H2, and the Long Count placement corresponds to the Period Ending 9.15.5.0.0, with the appropriate **NAAH-5-TUUN-ni**, *Naahho'tuun*, "First Five Stones," noted at G4. This date is the latest recorded on either panel of the Temple XIX platform, and I suspect it is the dedication date of the monument itself.

The principal verb of this passage is at H4, but it is badly damaged (alas, the seam between the two facing stones of the platform runs directly through all the glyphs of column H). The only visible portion of the glyph is a bent arm prefix sign, which is very clearly related to many similar examples in the later codices but otherwise unknown in the Classic sources, to my knowledge (Figure 79). Its reading remains uncertain, but in the Dresden Codex it is routinely prefixed to the signs **ba** and **la** in a

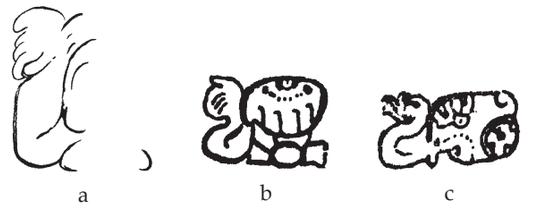


Figure 79. Examples of the "bent arm" sign at Palenque and in the Dresden Codex: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) Dresden, p. 10c, (c) Dresden, p. 3a.

glyph which Thompson (1972:35) once translated as "affliction," noting its association with negative auguries. The remaining two signs look to be **hi** (the "kawak" with the T60 hair knot) and **li**, a combination we have already seen on the stucco panel of Temple XIX. In that inscription it spells *hil*, an intransitive root for "to rest, remain, end." Here the surrounding glyphs are very different. Given the poor preservation, it would be foolhardy to analyze the verb glyph too much further.

The subject of the verb is written at block G5. This is the familiar sequence **yo-ko-bi-li**, a glyph already encountered near the beginning of this inscription at position A3 (the use of a head variant **bi** in the second example accounts for their slightly different look). There we saw that it likely spells the possessed noun *y-ok(i)b-il*, or "his/her *okib*," possibly in reference to a "pedestal," or the platform itself. Passage W-1 stated that an *okib* was built or made on 9.6.7.0.0 and that its owner was one Yax Itzam Aat, an obscure historical figure who may have been the great-grandfather of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. Here the owner named at H6 looks to be a different person altogether, but the poor preservation makes it impossible to read. Only the prefix **AJ**- is legible, placed before two other signs.

The symmetrical position of the *okib* references at the beginning and end of the west inscription cannot be coincidental. In some way this final passage was meant to juxtapose with the earlier "fashioning" of the *okib*. Might the later of the two events, with its clear associations with "end," "death," and negative auguries, logically signal completion of an *okib*, or the ending of a sequence of such monuments? The spelling **hi-li** for "end" in the main verb of the passage is suggestive of this, and we have already seen how *hil* was used in the stucco inscription of Temple XIX to mark the end-point of a series of related events or actions. The lack of a firm reading for the "bent arm" prefix sign hinders any full decipherment, but the context seems to offer a strong suggestion of an "ending" for the *okib* or a related series of such monuments. At any rate, the presence of the *okib* noun offers a good indication that the inscription of the platform here closes with a dedicatory statement of some sort.

According to the remaining glyphs in the passage, the event surrounding the *okib*, or perhaps the platform, occurred in the presence of at least one deity. The phrase *y-ich-n-al*, "(it is) in front of him/her/it," appears at G6 before an effaced name or title at H6 (**AJ-CHIT?-...**) and then the clearly written name of GI, who again seems to be singled out among the members of the Triad. Whether H6 and G7 constitute two separate names or an extended nominal sequence for GI is difficult to determine, but I know of no GI title that resembles the glyph here before his personal name; two entities might therefore be specified here as supernatural witnesses for the ritual event.

H7 is clearly a "scattering" glyph, continuing the close parallels between this passage and the opening statement of the west side. Just enough of this glyph is visible to see a **-ji** suffix beneath the hand sign, and I assume that its form was identical to that seen at B4 (save the alternate forms of the **U-** prefix). Here the subject is named in the final two blocks of the inscription, as **K'INICH AHK(-la)-MO'-NAHB**, closing with the royal title **K'UHUL-**

BAAK-la-AJAW. As before, I believe that this closing statement signifies that the king was a direct participant in the event and scattered incense upon the *okib* object.

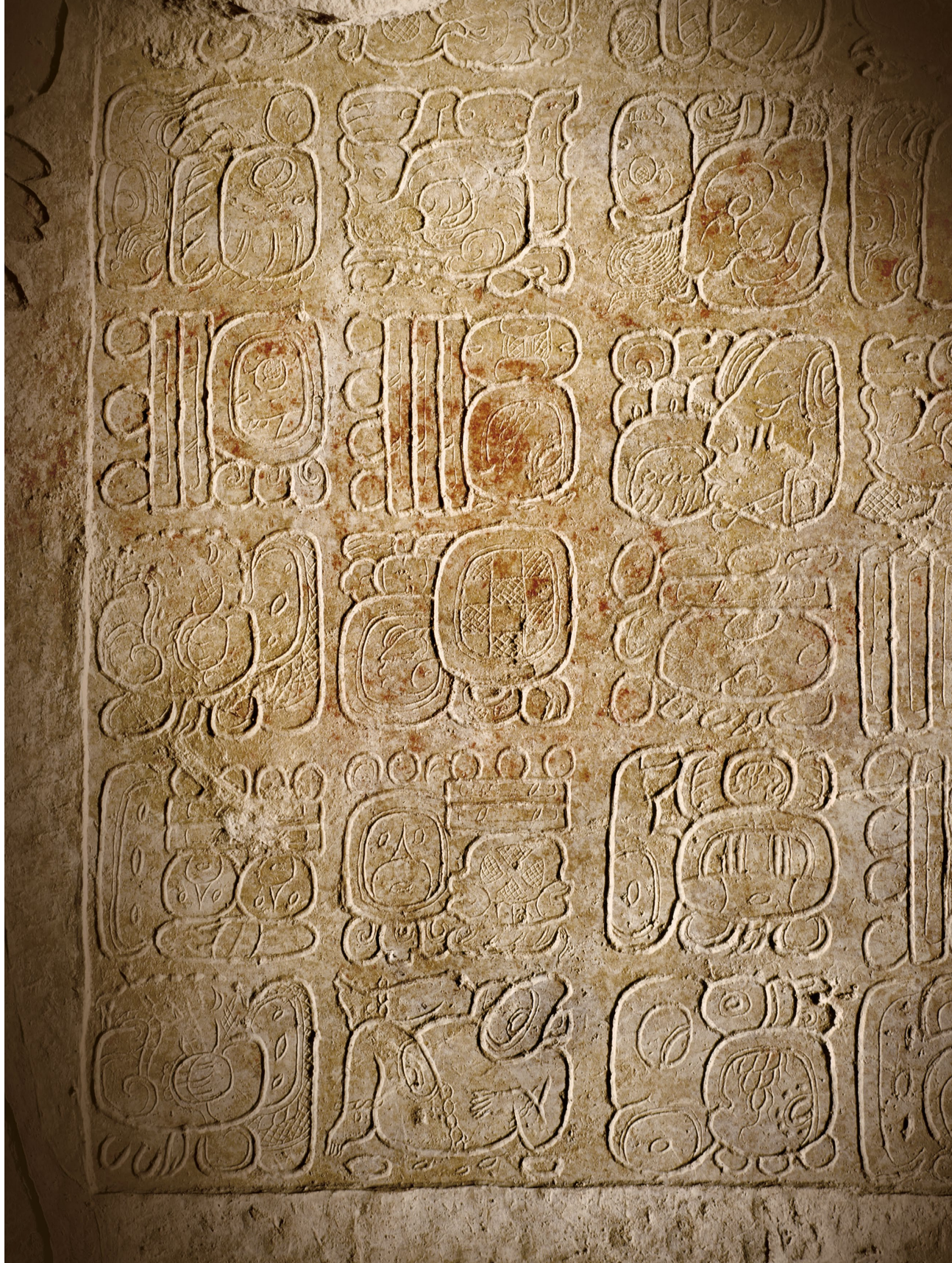
This final passage of the west face brings up one last point about the sequence of dedications and monumental constructions within the building. As we have seen recorded in several places, the dedication date of Temple XIX was 9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 Kayab, when the structure was apparently activated as a ritual space through the *och k'ahk'* ceremony. This day falls over two years before the final Period Ending date recorded in Passage W-6, 9.15.5.0.0, when it seems the platform itself may have been fashioned. There is little choice but to think that the platform was added to a pre-existing building at this time.



Detail of glyphs from the Temple XIX platform, south face.



Detail of glyphs from the Temple XIX platform, west face.



Detail of glyphs from the Temple XIX platform, south face.



Detail of Portrait I from the Temple XIX platform, west face.

Chapter 4.

The People



The platform's faces are most unusual for the number of people they portray—seven on the south side and three on the west. No other scene in the extant Palenque corpus of sculpture is as populated, although some poorly preserved remains might once have been. Wall panels at Palenque are well known for their "tri-figural" arrangement, as seen for example on the Tablet of the Slaves or on the Palace Tablet (Schele 1976). The unique setting and seemingly "rolled-out" dimensions of the Temple XIX platform sculptures help to account for their unusual look within the Palenque canon, but on further consideration their design does indeed fit well within local conventions of figural representation. If we consider the south panel's scene, for instance, we immediately see the balanced arrangement of people on either side of the seated king. Whereas "tri-figure" panels show one figure on either side of the central royal personage, the south platform face shows three on each side. Apart from the numbers involved, the composition of the scene falls squarely in the Palenque mode, placing the king at the center with flanking secondary figures. In showing three figures on each side of the king, the artist has retained the tri-figure convention and may have done so to evoke once more the "triadic" themes in the accompanying text, with its references to the Palenque Triad members and the three related dedicatory events recorded in the text of the west face.

In the tri-figure scenes found elsewhere at Palenque, the flanking pair are portraits of the king's parents, with the father to the ruler's own right and the mother to the ruler's left (the king always faces to the right, toward the father). We can therefore discern a regular spatial hierarchy in these figural compositions. Similarly, the set of figures to the right of the king on the Temple XIX platform (that is, our left) are the focus of his attention, and, not surprisingly, should therefore be considered of higher status than the figures to his left, or behind him. It is interesting also that on the south face the three men to the left all wear large jade earspools, whereas the others at right have simpler dangling ear ornaments.

Apart from the issues of figural composition, the basic question yet to be addressed is, "Who are they?" Luckily for us every figure has its own hieroglyphic label or caption, although, as might well be predicted, many of the individuals are unknown from Palenque's historical record, and their roles and relationships pose numerous new questions. Here I will consider each portrait in turn, designating them from left to right as "Portrait A," "Portrait B," etc.

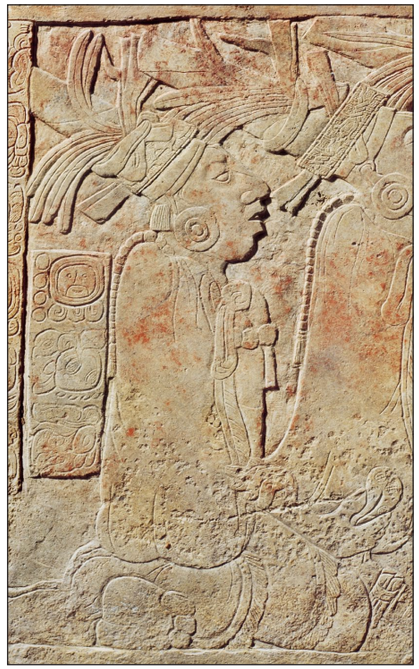




Figure 80. Temple XIX platform, Portrait A and name caption. See larger photograph at end of chapter.

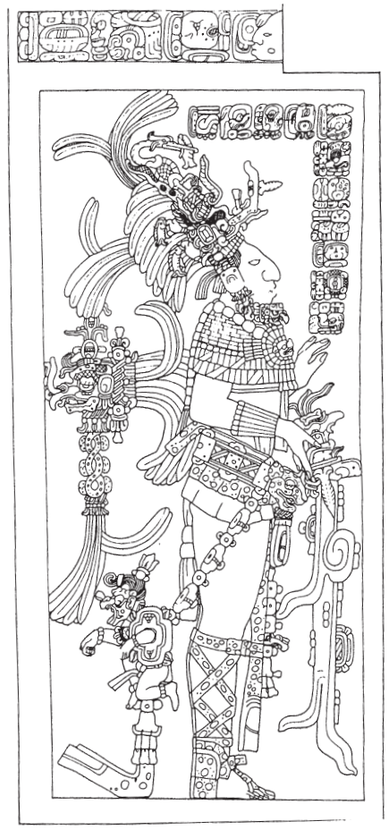


Figure 81. Sanctuary jamb panel, Temple of the Cross, Palenque (drawing by Linda Schele).

Portrait A

The visual relationship between the portraits and their glyphic captions is somewhat confusing at first glance. To the left and behind the set of three seated men who face the ruler we find two captions, one near floor level and another directly at the back of the leftmost figure. I can only guess for the present that the leftmost caption names the leftmost figure—"Portrait A"—and that the next caption to the right names the middle of the three figures. The design is somewhat cumbersome in this regard, but for now this seems a reasonable assessment.

The caption (Figure 80) holds three glyphs, the first two of which are the proper name **yo-OHL-la-ma-ta i-chi-BAAK ?**, the final unknown portion being a bird's head title soon to be discussed below. The name *Yohl Mat Ich Baak* is somewhat difficult to translate, but it seems in its first part to include a possessive construction *y-ohl mat*, possibly "the center (or heart) of the *mat* bird." The notion of being somehow within the *mat* bird immediately recalls the iconographic depictions of the king and his successor Upakal K'inich on the pier of Temple XIX, where they each are shown standing in the mouths of immense bird heads.

Ich (**i-chi**) seems also related to water birds. Turning to the sanctuary jamb panel from the Temple of the Cross (Figure 81), we find the spelling **i-chi-wa** in the caption accompanying the

portrait of K'inich Kan Bahlam, where it is part of an extended name phrase that alludes to his costume elements in a direct way. The full name phrase is **a-ku-la i-chi-wa U-K'IX?-CHAN K'INICH-KAN-BAHLAM**, etc., where the name of the Palenque ancestor Uk'ix Chan fuses directly with that of the living ruler. The portrait likewise emphasizes a fusion of identities, for in his headdress K'inich Kan Bahlam clearly wears the emblematic name of Uk'ix Chan, as an "impersonator" of his distant ancestor. In addition to the emblematic name of the very ancient ruler, we also see in the headdress a heron or egret clutching a fish in its beak and "wearing" a turtle shell. This must be related to the glyphs **a-ku-la i-chi-wa** which spell *ahkal ichiw*. *Ahk-al* is an adjectival derivation of "turtle" (as seen also in the name K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb), and *ichiw* seems likely to be related to one attested meaning of *ichil* as "*garza*" (Pineda 1986:393; see also Hunn 1977:140). The spelling **i-chi** in the name from Temple XIX just might also mean "heron," though certainly other readings are open (Hunn [1977:140], for example, explicitly links this Tzeltal word for "heron" to the widespread meaning of the root *ich*, "pepper," though he lacks an explanation of the usage). Like most other names on the platform, Yohl Mat Ich Baak is otherwise unknown in the extant records of Palenque.

Only the third and last glyph remains phonetically uncertain. The single sign of the block depicts the head of a screeching bird wearing a distinctive cloth headscarf, identifying it as an important but enigmatic title found in many other inscriptions of the Late Classic period. In fact we will come to find the same "banded bird" title applied to several other people in the scene of the south panel. This title remains undeciphered, but it will be discussed in more detail near the end of the present chapter.

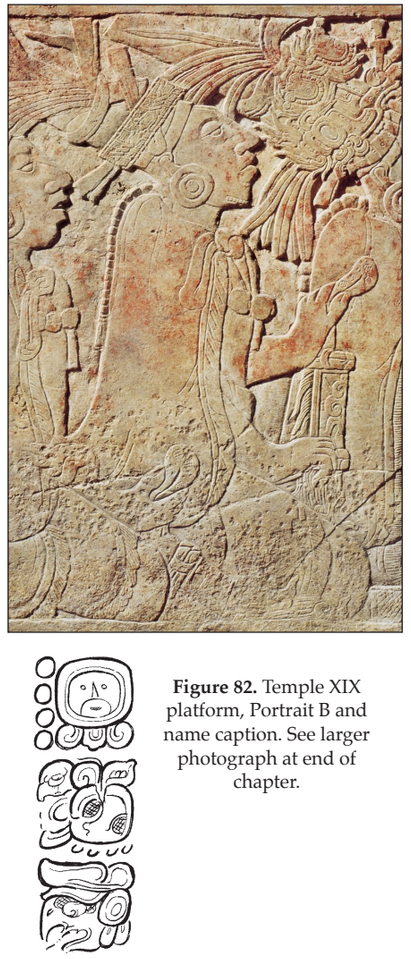


Figure 82. Temple XIX platform, Portrait B and name caption. See larger photograph at end of chapter.

Portrait B

The next figure has three glyphs in his name caption (Figure 82), opening with 4 Ajaw or *Chan Ajaw*. This is not a date, but rather a rare instance of a Maya calendar name using a station in the 260-day cycle. Similar calendar names are commonplace



Figure 83. The "Yomop" panel: (a) detail of sculptor's signature, (b) overall view (drawing by Nikolai Grube from Mayer 1995:Pl. 141).

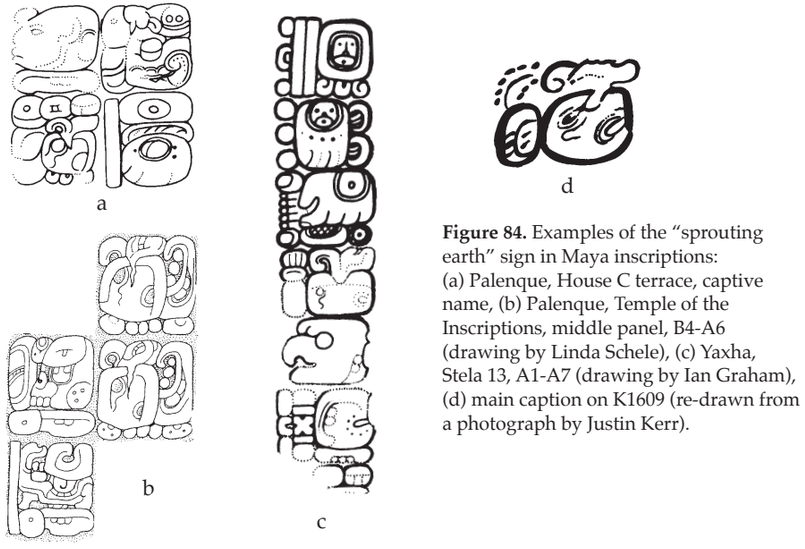


Figure 84. Examples of the "sprouting earth" sign in Maya inscriptions: (a) Palenque, House C terrace, captive name, (b) Palenque, Temple of the Inscriptions, middle panel, B4-A6 (drawing by Linda Schele), (c) Yaxha, Stela 13, A1-A7 (drawing by Ian Graham), (d) main caption on K1609 (re-drawn from a photograph by Justin Kerr).

elsewhere in Mesoamerica, but only a handful of comparable examples are known from the Maya region. At Palenque, a sculptor of the "Death's Head" monument from the Cross Group bore the name "5 K'an." Interestingly, "4 Ajaw" appears as a sculptor's name recorded on the so-called "Yomop Stela," possibly from the region of Pomona (Figure 83). One wonders if this could be the same individual depicted at Palenque, but the lack of a firm date for the Yomop monument makes this identification impossible to confirm; for now we can only assume they are different people. I suspect calendar names were more common than the epigraphic evidence reflects, especially in the western lowlands, where all the known Late Classic examples have been found. Calendar names with distinctive square cartouches are common in the very latest texts of Seibal, Ucanal, and other sites in the central Peten, shown with Terminal Classic iconography that has long been associated with migrations from what is now Tabasco and neighboring coastal regions (J. Graham 1973).

The second glyph in the name caption is **a-?-ji**, the main sign of which seems to represent a maize plant sprouting from the cleft earth. A few other examples of this sign are known, but its phonetic value is still a mystery (Figure 84). There is every reason to think it a logograph, based upon its usage in several different contexts.[39] It occurs in other personal names or titles, and the **-ji** suffix is known on a few other examples. Lastly we encounter the same bird title found with his companion in Portrait A.

Portrait C

The third figure on the south side faces and engages the ruler, and on the basis of his key role in the scene and his important titles, he should be considered the most important of the royal attendants. In his

[39] For example, we find the sprout-earth sign used twice in the central panel of the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, where it seems to spell a verb root of some sort. The ending **-la-ja** suggests it might be a classifiable as a positional verb. The subjects of the two verbs are types of supernatural or cosmologically important "trees" (with the suffix **-TE'**, "plant, tree"), and I would suppose the passage records some type of "sprouting" of these plants.





Figure 85. Temple XIX platform, Portrait C and name caption. See larger photograph at end of chapter.

costume he resembles the two lords at his back, except for the elaborate headdress. He wears the conical cloth hat and tied feathers shared by all, but the man in Portrait C has in addition to this an ornate headdress depicting the head of the Principal Bird Deity, a well known and easily recognizable character in Maya religious iconography. The large eye with its square pupil and the elongated beak are important visual markers for this supernatural bird, who served as an avian aspect of God D or Itzamnaaj.

The caption (Figure 85) is unlike the other two addressed so far in that it is introduced by a special possessive construction composed of *u-baah-il* and the "number tree element (**AHN?**), here conflated as they often are. The combination is known from other inscriptions at Palenque and elsewhere as a specialized phrase that introduces the name of a god or some other supernatural entity that is "impersonated" by a historical person (Houston and Stuart 1996). The name of the god or supernatural follows directly after this introductory statement, and this in turn is always followed by the personal name of the human "impersonator." Phonetic evidence in other inscriptions suggests that the opening phrase of the caption, in the initial block, has a full reading like *u-baah-il ahn*, where *u-baah* is surely the common caption opener, "(it is) the 'person, image' of…" (Houston and Stuart 1998). The addition of the *-il* suffix is difficult to explain, but it always occurs when found with the "number tree" element. Unfortunately, its reading **AHN** (based on the occasional substitution by the sequence **a-nu**) remains obscure semantically.

In this caption, therefore, we should expect two names to follow: first the name of an "impersonated" entity, followed by the personal name of a historical personage. This is in fact confirmed once we move to the second block of the caption, where we come upon a familiar deity name: **YAX-NAAH-ITZAMNAAJ**. This name appears in the main text of the south side at blocks C7-D7, in reference to the god who "oversaw" the early accession rite of GI on 12.10.1.13.2 9 Ik' 5 Mol. (There, the name took a slightly different form—**YAX-NAAH-hi ITZAMNAAJ-ji**—being divided between two glyph blocks.) The second name of the caption always follows directly after the first, and in the third block we find the true name of the figure seated before the ruler, spelled **JANAB-AJAW**. The fourth and final glyph of the caption, as we shall soon see, is his title.

If other examples of this *u-baah-il ahn* "impersonation phrase" are any indication, we would expect the portrait of Janab Ajaw to show him in some sort of deity mask or costume. Sometimes the deity regalia worn by a person is more subtle, however, and here it seems that the man's headdress shows enough to identify him as an avatar or representative of Itzamnaaj. As we have seen, the headgear of Janab Ajaw is the head of the Principal Bird Deity, one of the most important figures of Maya mythology, who seems to have been a Classic-era counterpart to the upstart solar bird Vuqub Caquix of the *Popol Vuh*.[40] When we soon discuss the ruler's own interesting portrait and attire, we will see that this "impersonation" of Itzamnaaj by Janab Ajaw is closely tied to the opening passage of the mythological narrative presented in the platform's text.

[40] The connection between the Principal Bird Deity and Vuqub Caquix of the *Popol Vuh* has been known for many years, and was established primarily through artistic scenes with clear connections to the later K'iche' epic. A famous Classic period vessel (K1226) now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, depicts an obvious scene from the *Popol Vuh* narrative, with the Principal Bird Deity falling from a tree, shot by the young blowgunner Jun Ajaw (Hunahpu) (M. Coe 1990). The bird appears to have lost its lower beak or mandible, suggesting again a connection to the description of the wounded Vuqub Caquix. The image of a descending Principal Bird Deity without its lower beak is probably the basis for many royal headdresses seen in Classic Maya art.

The final glyph in the name caption seems a variant of the "banded bird" title accompanying the other two individuals in Portraits A and B, but here it is qualified by the addition of **AJAW**, probably indicating that he was the highest ranking of this class or category of individual. The bird is not visible here, but the distinctive headdress sign is clearly given in combination with **-ta**, a common suffix on the bird's head.

The very same Janab Ajaw is named on the fragmented hieroglyphic panel recovered from Structure 16 and now dubbed the "K'an Tok Panel" (Bernal Romero 1999) (Figure 86). That important and late inscription provides a list of accessions of individuals into what may be the subordinate "banded bird" office. Several Palenque rulers oversaw these inaugurations over centuries of local history, and during the reign of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam, the immediate predecessor of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, we read of the "fastening of the headband onto" Janab Ajaw on the day 9.14.7.0.15 6 Men 13 K'ank'in. This date comes just over three years before the accession of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, the depiction of which we have on the platform.

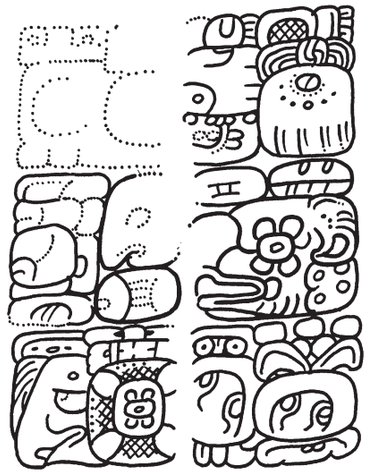


Figure 86. Passage from the K'an Tok panel (G6-H8), recording the office-taking by Janab Ajaw.

Janab Ajaw is named on the K'an Tok panel with the fascinating title phrase **U-MAM K'INICH-JANAB-PAKAL**, or *u-mam K'inich Janab Pakal*, "(he is) the grandson of K'inich Janab Pakal." If this is so, Janab Ajaw must be the offspring of one of the two sons of Pakal who ruled before K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, or else some other child of Pakal (a daughter?) now lost from the historical record. K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb was himself a likely grandchild of Pakal, directly descended through Tiwol Chan Mat. Janab Ajaw was thus at least a cousin of the newly installed king.

Portrait D

The fourth and central figure of the south side is the ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, shown leaning forward to receive the headband held forth by Janab Ajaw (Figure 87). As noted at the beginning of this chapter, these two figures at the center of this scene are shown in a standard presentation arrangement known elsewhere in Palenque art. Their central role in the scene is also reflected in the shared use of the *u baah-il ahn* "impersonation" phrase to introduce their respective names. Both Janab Ajaw and the king, it seems, are in



Figure 87. Temple XIX platform, Portrait D and name caption.

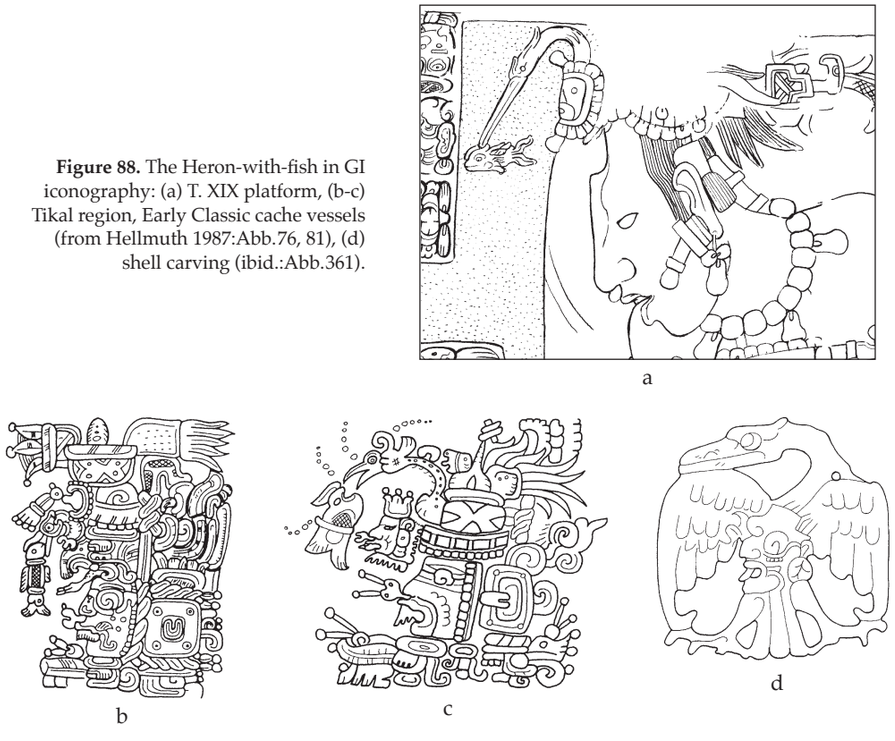


Figure 88. The Heron-with-fish in GI iconography: (a) T. XIX platform, (b-c) Tikal region, Early Classic cache vessels (from Hellmuth 1987:Abb.76, 81), (d) shell carving (ibid.:Abb.361).

the guise of deities.

We have seen in our discussion of the previous portrait and name caption that Janab Ajaw here assumes the role of Yax Naah Itzamnaaj, the overseer of GI's mythical accession to office on 9 Ik' 5 Mol. It should not come as too much of a surprise, then, to read in this royal name phrase a reference to GI, immediately after the impersonation phrase and before the king's personal name. The scene of the south side is, we recall, a re-creation or reenactment of GI's accession nearly four millennia earlier, and of course we have already seen in Chapter 3 that this connection was made clear through numerous textual, calendrical, astronomical, and numerological parallels.

Given what we read in the caption, the headdress in the king's portrait ought to present some visual connection to GI, and despite some missing portions we do clearly see that the forehead embellishments of the headgear include the head of a water bird holding a fish in its beak (Figure 88a). The neck of the bird, perhaps a cormorant or heron, emerges from the top of an "ajaw" medallion that looks to have been part of a beaded jade headband. This water bird image is in fact a key element in the iconographic program that accompanies GI throughout the Classic period. In numerous GI portraits on Early Classic Cache vessels, for example, the bird and the fish frequently emerge from the god's headdress (Figure 88b-c). A late example of the same relationship is found on Stela 2 from Seibal, where the bird rests atop the full standing portrait of GI (Figure 89). The "ajaw" medallion with its border of dots is also clearly associated with GI, as seen in Early Classic name phrases where it is routinely combined with the **NAAH** sign and a hand (**K'AB**?) (Figure 90). K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb therefore is shown as a human version or embodiment of the deity GI.

The third glyph of the king's caption is unusual but may be analyzed as a variant of the title **ya-AJAW-TE'-K'INICH**, or *Yajawte' K'inich*, a combination found at Palenque and other sites, sometimes even as a royal name. Because of its placement here, *Yajawte' K'inich* appears to be some type of elaboration on the simple term **K'INICH** that is so consistently part of the royal name, for in the next block we find the proper name **AHK-la-MO'-NAHB** without this customary prefix. In other Palenque inscriptions such as the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, we find slightly different spellings of *Yajawte' K'inich* before kings' names, providing still further examples of this curious association of titles (Figure 91).

The ruler carries two other royal titles with his name,

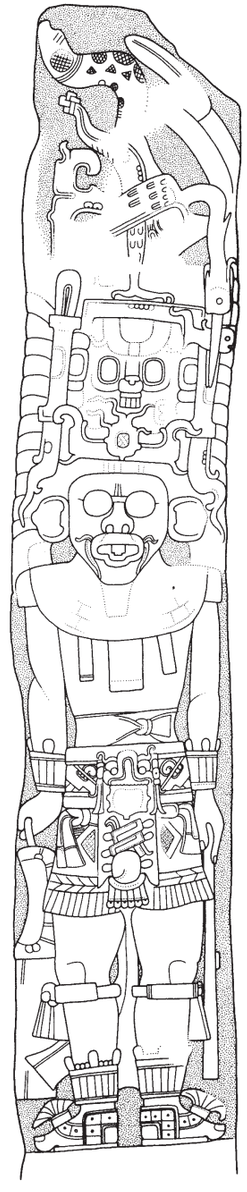


Figure 89. Seibal, Stela 2 (drawing by Ian Graham from Graham 1996:15).



Figure 90. Expanded name phrases of GI, showing association with the "dotted ajaw" sign: (a) Uaxactun, cache vessel (drawn after Smith 1955, II:Fig.7a), (b) Collections, Early Classic celt (drawing by Dorie Reents-Budet), (c) Tikal, Stela 31, A24-B24 (from Jones and Satterthwaite 1982:Fig.52b).

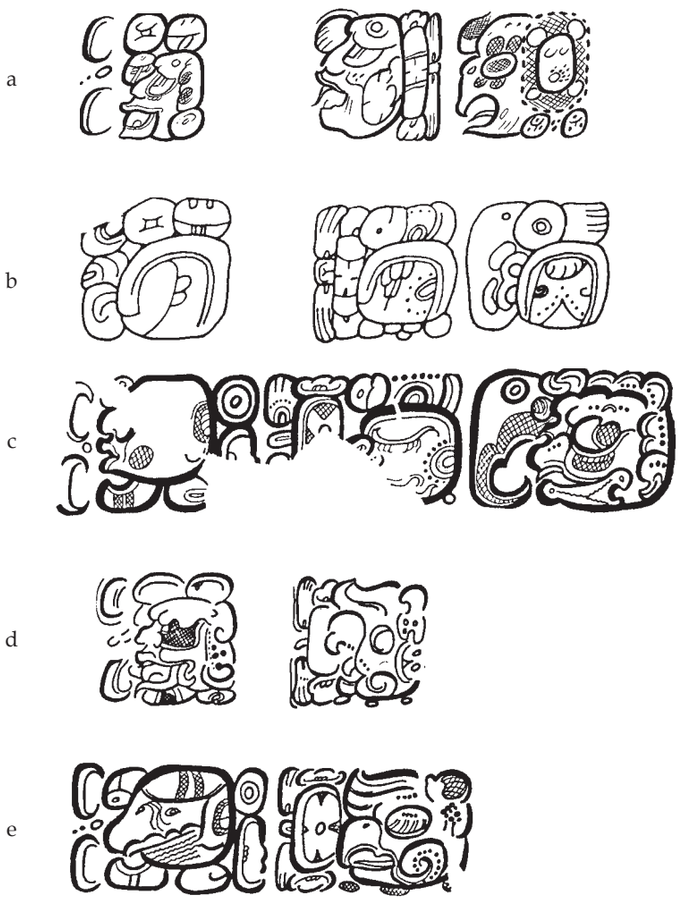


Figure 91. The title *Yajawte' K'inich* in royal names at Palenque: (a) T. XXI platform, (b) Tablet of the Orator, C1-D2 (drawing by Linda Schele), (c) Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, E4-E5, (d) Palace slab, pI-pJ (from Schele and Mathews 1979:No.37), (e) Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, I3-J3 (drawing by Linda Schele).

"Holy Lord of Baakal" (the Emblem Glyph) and, most importantly, the axe-wielding Chaak image in the last glyph, probably read **KALOM-TE'**. This was one of the most important titles for supreme rulers, found prominently at Tikal, Copan, Calakmul, and Yaxchilan, as well as Palenque. No other example is known to exist, however, with the name of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb.

Portrait E

Seated behind K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb we find a man with the familiar name **yo-ko-?-TAL** (Figure 92). This is his third appearance so far in our overview of the Temple XIX texts, as he appeared also in the text of the *alfarda* and in another portrait on the large stone panel, as the kneeling figure at lower right. This man, always bearing the *yajaw k'ahk'* title, is clearly a major protagonist associated with Temple XIX, and I think he probably served as a ritual specialist or official for this specific building.

The spelling of the title, **ya-ja-wa-K'AHK'**, once more differs slightly (see Figure 7). As noted earlier, these spellings vary in subtle ways, differing mainly in their use of full or truncated forms of the **K'AHK'** logograph and in the alternation of the **AJAW** head logograph with a syllabic spelling. All versions spell the same title *Yajaw K'ahk'*, "Lord of Fire."

To understand this person's role as a court functionary and attendant to the king, we must step back somewhat and discern what we can of the special "Lord of Fire" title, for it appears with other names at Palenque and other sites. During the reign of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb there was at least one other noble with this title, bearing the familiar name Chak Suutz', featured in the text of the Tablet of the Slaves. The central figure of this tablet has long been thought to be Chak Suutz', since he is the protagonist of the text above, but there is good evidence now to identify him as the king K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, flanked by his mother and father (Wald 1997). In addition to being a *yajaw k'ahk'*, Chak Suutz' is named as a *sajal*, another "subordinate" title associated with military figures and outlying governors in the western Maya area.





Figure 92. Temple XIX platform, Portrait E and name caption. See larger photograph at end of chapter.



Figure 93. Accession of a *yajaw k'ahk'* noble, from the Group IV censer stand (drawing by Linda Schele).



a b

Figure 94. "Goggles" in the headdresses of *yajaw k'ahk'* lords: (a) Palenque Group IV censer stand, (b) Temple XIX stone panel (drawings by Mark Van Stone.)

It seems likely that *yajaw k'ahk'* was yet another office held by certain elites of Palenque's royal court. An important inscription on a stone censer stand excavated in Group IV cites an earlier accession of a noble named Aj Sul (**AJ-su-lu**) into this status, on 9.8.17.10.14, under the auspices of Janab Pakal (Figure 93).[41] It is hard to know if more than one individual could occupy the *yajaw k'ahk'* position at any one time, but it remains possible that this junior office was reserved for one lord, as seems likely for the "banded bird ajaw" position. Chak Suutz' was also a *yajaw k'ahk'* under the reign of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, but his known dates fall slightly before those of the Temple XIX protagonist. They may have been successive office holders, or else rough contemporaries of the same status.

The portrait of Aj Sul on the Group IV *incensario* shows a distinctive headdress with two large "goggles," very similar to the devices shown on warrior portraits in Maya art but with likely origins in Teotihuacan military costume (Figure 94). Yok ? Tal, the *yajaw k'ahk'* of Temple XIX, likewise displays large goggles on his forehead in both of his portraits, suggesting that these are distinctive accoutrements of the office.

Yajaw k'ahk' appears in the inscriptions of several sites of the western and northern lowlands (see Figure 7). Most examples outside of Palenque come from Chichen Itza, where

[41] The Janab Pakal cited on the Group IV censer stand is not the famous king K'inich Janab Pakal but rather the enigmatic figure sometimes called "Pacal I" and portrayed as an ancestor on the sarcophagus lid. The date 9.8.17.10.14 came nearly five years before the accession of the noted twelve-year-old king, and about two years before the inauguration of the historical "? Muwaan Mat," who, as we will discuss later in this work, briefly ruled in the wake of Palenque's defeat by Calakmul on 9.8.17.15.14. Janab Pakal was never a Palenque ruler but must have held some sort of authoritative position *somewhere* during the reign of Aj Neh Yohl Mat, who was Palenque's "Holy Lord" at the time. It is important to remember that K'inich Janab Pakal was not the son of a Palenque ruler, and that his appearance at Palenque may have been something of an outside intrusion resulting from a major disruption of the local dynasty at the time of the Calakmul conflict. Janab Pakal was evidently his direct ancestor, possibly a father of K'an Hix Mo' or Ix Sak K'uk' (Schele 1992), but there is no reason to assume he lived at Palenque proper as a member of Aj Neh Yohl Mat's court or close family.

As for the man named Aj Sul, he assumed the office of *yajaw k'ahk'* during this unstable time in Palenque's history and soon before the inauguration of K'inich Janab Pakal. He evidently lived to become an important figure in Palenque's political and military scene as late as 9.11.1.12.6, when he participated in an event recorded on the "subterraneos" throne support. He is also named on a reused block from the North Group, part of a larger frieze that once depicted a militaristic episode in the reign of K'inich Janab Pakal.

it is of special importance with certain names there. The hieroglyphic forms of the title vary only slightly, usually either **ya-ja-wa-K'AHK'** or **ya-AJAW-K'AHK'**, with **AJAW** sometimes taking varied forms. The **K'AHK'** reading of the final "smoke" element is confirmed by the occasional addition of a **k'a** complement.

Like other subordinate titles, *yajaw k'ahk'* appears as a possessed noun, prefixed by **U**-, on Piedras Negras, Stela 12. Here it interposes between two names, the first apparently of a captive (following the verb *chuhk-(a)j-iiy*, "he was captured") and the second of a foreign ruler. The captured individual was therefore "the *yajaw k'ahk'* of" a higher-ranking lord, suggesting that the title carries a certain connotation of political or social status.

It is possible that Yok ? Tal is portrayed again on the small tablet fragment from Group XVI (Figure 95). A portion of his name (**yo-OK-? …**) is perhaps just discernible at the lower left of the fragment, where it identifies the man who stands behind the king and looks off to the left.

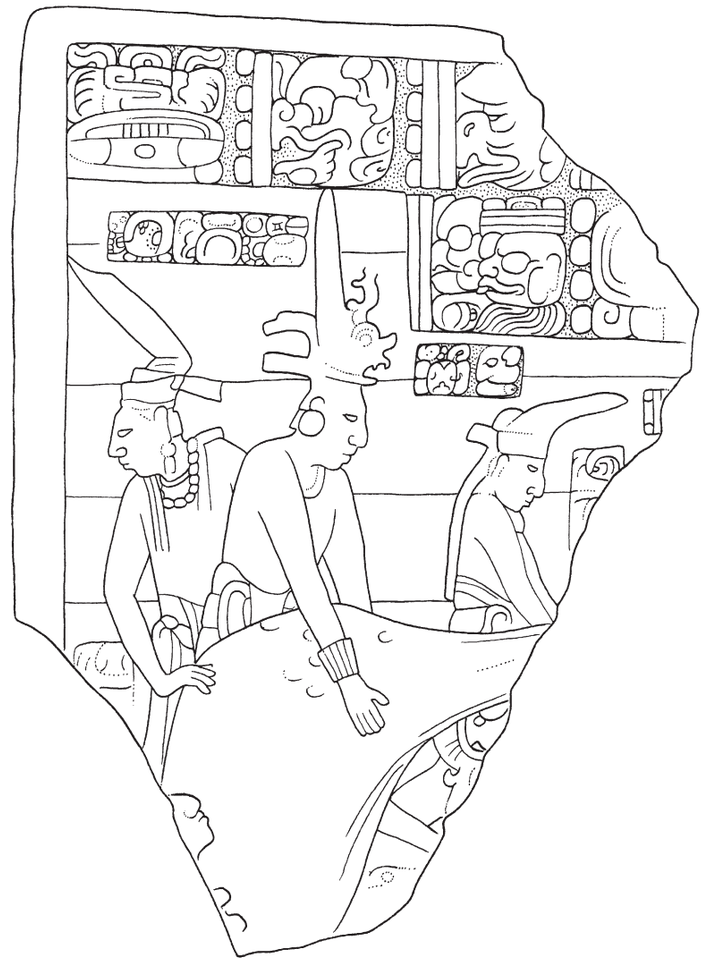


Figure 95. Miniature tablet from Group XVI.





Figure 96. Temple XIX platform, Portrait F and name caption. See larger photograph at end of chapter.

Portrait F

Continuing along the south side of the platform, we encounter the second of three seated figures shown to the right, or behind, the enthroned ruler. This man's name is written with two glyphs placed to the upper left of the scene, near the right panel of the main inscription: **ya-YAX-sa-ja-la ma-k'a-ba-ja-TE'** (Figure 96). The name is semantically very obscure, although the initial spelling **ya-YAX-** probably indicates the reduplicated color adjective *yayax*, "green" or "very green." The term *sajal* may be the subordinate title, but the addition of the adjective here makes it an unusual form, if so.

The second glyph displays an interesting visual arrangement of signs, where **ma** and **k'a** are conflated and **ba** is reduced within the rounded part of **TE'**. I have no translation to offer for the combination (**mäk'* is a proto-Ch'olan root for "eat soft things"), but it is reminiscent of another name known from earlier Palenque history. During the reign of K'inich Janab Pakal, an important subordinate lord incorporated the same sequence in his name, written in full as **yu-ku ma-k'a-ba-TE'** on the sarcophagus lid of the Temple of the Inscriptions, and also cited on the stone censer found in Group IV (Figure 97). In the censer text (Figure 97b) the name is slightly different in having the additional element **-ja** before the final **-TE'** suffix, making a further connection to the name of Portrait F on the platform. Perhaps the phrase is an embedded verbal form (*mak'-(a)b-aj te'*?) used as a name, but it is difficult to analyze morphologically if so. In any event, the name on the platform is certainly different enough in its full form to distinguish it from the name of this earlier figure from Pakal's time, though it is perfectly conceivable that they were kin relations.

The lack of any discernible title with this individual is likely due to his more junior rank within the depicted gathering of noblemen.



a b

Figure 97. Comparison of two names: (a) Sarcophagus of Pakal (drawing by Merle Greene Robertson), (b) Group IV censer stand (drawing by Mark Van Stone).

Portrait G

The last figure on the south face of the platform (Figure 98) bears a name written in three blocks: **MUWAAN-ni cha-nu-la a-AHN?**, likely read as *Muwaan Chanul Ahn(?)*. Only the reading of the final element (the "number tree") presents a question, due to the lack of any reliable semantic gloss for the term *an* or *ahn* (see the caption of Portrait C for another example of its use). As for the other components of the name, *muwaan* is "hawk," in addition to being a month name.[42] *Chanul* is a complex lexeme with meanings that include "animal" in Tzeltal and Tzotzil, and it is probably a cognate of *kanul*, a Yucatecan term for "guardian."

Muwaan Chanul Ahn seems to constitute his full name, for none of the terms are known to serve as any sort of title. Like the person in front of him, he is seated behind the ruler and appears to occupy the most subordinate position within the gathering of nobles. The lack of a title with his name presumably reflects this lower social position.

The unusual hands of Muwaan Chanul Ahn may indicate a physical deformity, perhaps a condition as severe as acromegaly, first recognized by Robertson, Scandizzo, and Scandizzo (1976) in the naturalistic portraits of Ix Sak K'uk' from the sides of K'inich Janab Pakal's sarcophagus (Figure 99). This syndrome is indicated by several diagnostic criteria, including an enlarged head with an elongated jaw and enlarged "spade-like" hands. If we recall our discussion of the stone tablet from Temple XIX, there is the intriguing possibility that the left kneeling figure there is the same man, shown in a far more elegant light (see Figure 23). His facial





Figure 98. Temple XIX platform, Portrait G and name caption. See larger photograph at end of chapter.

[42] The species identification of the **MUWAAN** bird is very likely a hawk. In Yucatec *moan* is "screech owl" (Thompson 1950:114), but "hawk" is more directly indicated by the entry *muhan*, "gabilan, milano," in Moran's Ch'olti' word list (Moran 1935:32) and in Wisdom's (1950) Ch'orti' lexicon. Despite the linguistic ambiguity, the image of the glyph is that of a raptorial bird possibly consuming another, smaller avian within its beak (or is it an image of a young hatchling feeding from the gullet of its parent?).



Figure 99. Portrait of Ix Sak K'uk' from the sarcophagus of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque (drawing by Merle Greene Robertson).



Figure 100. Temple XIX platform, Portrait H and name caption. See larger photograph at end of chapter.



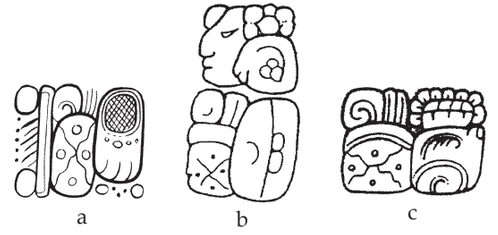


Figure 101. Examples of a "Waterlily Pad" sign from various inscriptions: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) name of royal woman on a lintel from the Yaxchilan area (drawing by John Montgomery), (c) probable place name, Yaxchilan, Lnt. 41 (from Graham 1979:91).

features are vaguely similar to the man shown on the platform and, most remarkably, his fingers seem short and lacking nails.

Portrait H

Moving on to the west side of the platform, the left-hand figure, facing away from his two companions, is named with three hieroglyphs reading **AJ-?-HA'-la ch'o-ko ?** (Figure 100). I am uncertain if a true personal name is to be found among any of these three blocks. The first glyph bears the agentive prefix **AJ-** before a possible toponym that includes the term *ha'*, "water." The intervening element resembling a waterlily pad has no secure value, although a few examples are known from other texts (Figure 101). The middle glyph of the name phrase spells *ch'ok*, "youth, emergent one," which in other contexts often serves as a title for junior members of the royal family. Finally, and most perplexingly, the third glyph is a single sign representing a heron eating a fish—identical in all respects to its three appearances in the stucco text of Temple XIX's pier. In that text, the heron-with-fish sign seems to serve as a logogram, perhaps with a role as a verb root; its presence here as part of a personal name or as a title is strange indeed. The connection between this lord and the scene on the pier, if one exists, is unknown.

Portrait I

The central and main figure of the west side holds a large bundle of coiled rope and gestures toward the seated man at his left (Figure 102). His image surely must correspond to the ritual named "rope-taking" cited throughout the Temple XIX inscriptions, including the nearby Passage W-4. The caption above his face reads: **sa-ja-la 9-na o-ki-bi AJ-3-TE'-K'UH**, *Salaj Bolon Okib Aj Uxte'k'uh*, and the personal name within this phrase, Salaj Bolon, is also recorded twice in the main inscription on the west side.

As we have seen, the name is written at C4 and E4 of the west side using slightly different spellings: **sa-ja-la-9** in one case and **sa-la-ja-9** in another. The form of the name in the caption strongly indicates that *Salaj Bolon* is the preferred reading, which is now perhaps confirmed by yet another citation as **sa-la-ja-9** on the Temple XXI platform. The caption name is somewhat expanded by using a **-na** head as a suffix to the number 9, surely as a phonetic complement to *bolon*.

Salaj Bolon—a key player in the story of this building, it seems—was involved in three different rituals cited in the Temple XIX and XXI texts: (1) on the K'atun ending 9.15.0.0.0, he participated in some ceremony involving GI of the Triad; (2) on 9.15.2.9.0, he participated in a "rope-taking" rite, probably corresponding to the scene of the west side, and (3) he had some



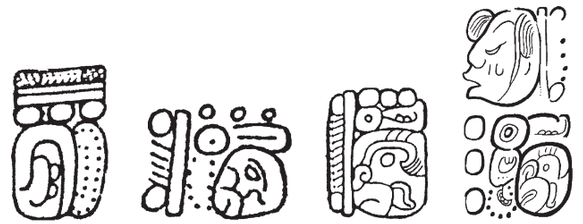


Figure 102. Temple XIX platform, Portrait I and name caption.

obscure role in the celebrations of the Period Ending 9.15.5.0.0, as cited in an incomplete record on Temple XXI's platform.

His connection to the king and his court remains obscure, but clues to his identity may come from the last two glyphs of the caption, **o-ki-bi** (*okib*) and **AJ-3-TE'-K'UH** (*Aj Uxte'k'uh*). *Okib* is a term we have come across many times, of course, as a probable term for "pedestal," in reference to the platforms of Temples XIX and XXI. As discussed earlier, however, *okib* in association with personal names may indicate a different word altogether, as confusing as this may at first seem. The spellings of the two glyphs (**yo-ko-bi-li** and **o-ki-bi**) are slightly different in their use **ko** and **ki**, which is possibly more of a distinction than would be expected if one word were simply the possessed form of the other. I hesitate to suggest that the words are unrelated, but for now I prefer to treat them as separate terms.

Okib occurs, as we have seen, as a possible title for K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb in the accession record in Passage S-7. Likewise we find the term in connection with Upakal K'inich in one of the texts newly discovered in Temple XXI, associated with an early event in his life that occurred during the reign of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam. Taken together with the two cases of Salaj Bolon having this *okib* designation (the other being from Temple XXI also), we have a



a b c d

Figure 103. The title *Aj Uxte'k'uh* at Tortuguero and vicinity: (a) Tortuguero, M.6 (drawing by Ian Graham), (b) large stone earspool probably of Tortuguero origin (drawing by Berthold Riese), (c) sculptor's name from the "Yomop" panel (drawing by Nikolai Grube), (d) T. XXI platform.

total of three bearers of the title, none being established as rulers when they hold it.

As Bernal Romero has pointed out, the new platform from Temple XXI has a key piece of evidence in understanding the nature of the *okib* title. There, the caption to the portrait of K'inich Ahkal Mo Nahb says *Okib u ch'ok k'aba' K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb*, or "*Okib* is the youth name of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb." If the pattern of its appearance with "pre-rulers" wasn't clear enough, this single example establishes that *Okib* was considered a "pre-accession" designation for this future king, shown in a ritual that occurred far before his own inauguration. (The scene on the Temple XXI platform tablet surely corresponds to the opening Long Count date, 9.13.17.9.0 3 Ajaw 3 Yax, the "first" in the series of three dates recorded on the stucco pier.)

One must wonder then if Salaj Bolon, being the *okib* at the time of the dedication of Temples XIX and XXI, was in line to assume the throne after K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb and his son or brother Upakal K'inich. He may in fact be the young K'inich K'uk' Bahlam (who assumed power on 9.16.13.0.7 9 Manik' 15 Wo), but this is far too rash a speculation to sustain until further evidence comes to light.

The other important title carried by Salaj Bolon in this caption is *Aj Uxte'k'uh*, "He of Three Gods." This same term occurs at Palenque with the name of Lady Ix Kinuw Mat, the mother of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, and also in the name of Yax Itzam Aat, the ancestral figure named in the opening passage of the platform's west side. Interestingly, both the *Okib* and *Aj Uxte'k'uh* titles appear together with Yax Itzam Aat. Beyond Palenque, we find *Aj Uxte'k'uh* also cited at Tortuguero and on the "Yomop" stela (Figure 103). Although it is tempting to relate this title to the Palenque Triad, it seems "Three Gods" may well have been a place name of some locality in the general Palenque region, but its identity remains elusive.

Portrait J

The third and right-most figure on the west side has another fascinating name phrase, and again it is without known parallels in other Palenque inscriptions (Figure 104). The four glyphs that comprise the caption are **YAX-?-na 2o-la-AJAW ch'o-ko SUUTZ'-AJAW**. I suspect that the first two are the personal name, and that he is then named as the *ch'ok ajaw*, or "junior lord," of a place or polity designated simply with the bat logogram (**SUUTZ'**). The name itself presents some difficulties: following **YAX-** the main element of the first block resembles the sign I have suggested reads **TAK** (often a pluralizing suffix), but here the use seems quite different, and the darkened hatching inside the sign may suggest a separate sign altogether. The **-na** suffix seems also indicative of a different logogram, so as yet the name remains incompletely read.

In the second block we see the rare use of the "doubler," or the two small dots that scribes used as a marker to repeat certain signs in the blocks to which they are attached (see

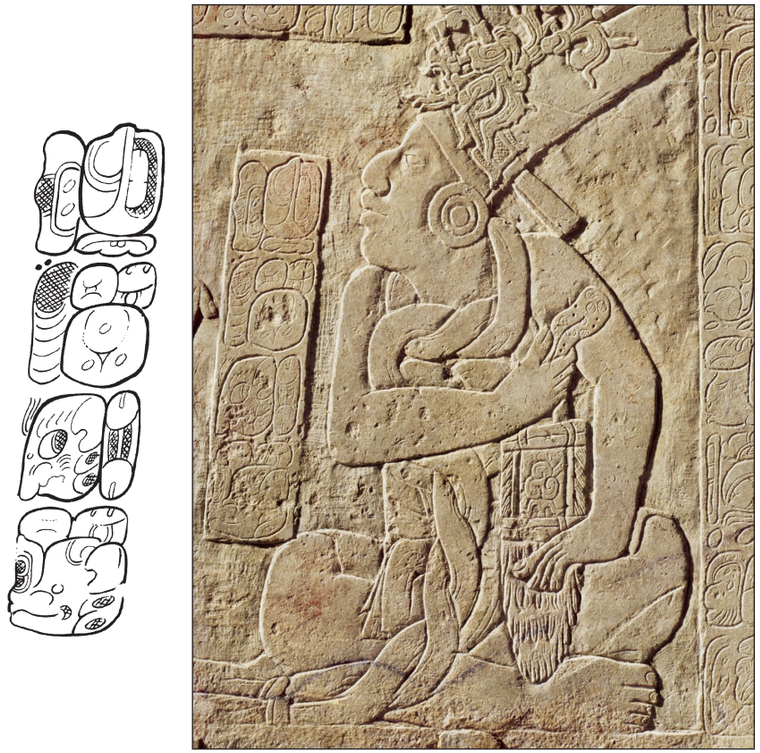


Figure 104. Temple XIX platform, Portrait J and name caption.

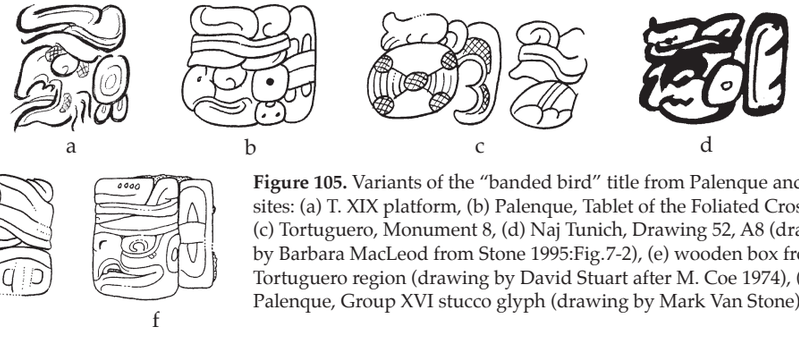


Figure 105. Variants of the "banded bird" title from Palenque and other sites: (a) T. XIX platform, (b) Palenque, Tablet of the Foliated Cross, M11, (c) Tortuguero, Monument 8, (d) Naj Tunich, Drawing 52, A8 (drawing by Barbara MacLeod from Stone 1995:Fig.7-2), (e) wooden box from Tortuguero region (drawing by David Stuart after M. Coe 1974), (f) Palenque, Group XVI stucco glyph (drawing by Mark Van Stone).

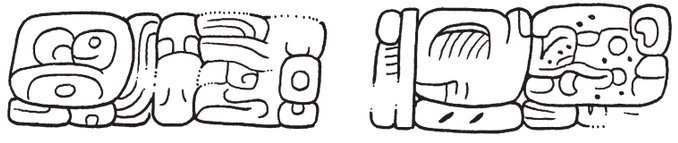


Figure 106. The seating of a Tortuguero noble named Aj K'ax Bahlam into the "banded bird" status, from an inscribed wooden box of unknown provenance (drawing by David Stuart after M. Coe 1974).

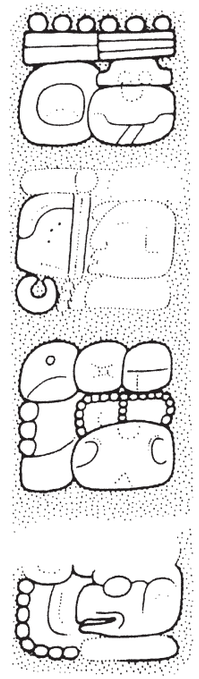
Stuart and Houston 1994:Fig.57). Here it is next to the syllable **o** and before **la** with the intended results **o-o-la** (*o'ol*?) or **o-la-la** (*olal*). I have no preference to propose between these, given that no similar forms of this name or title appear in inscriptions elsewhere. In all, the identity of this fellow remains a mystery.

The "Banded Bird" Title

The same "banded bird" glyph we find with several of the names in Temple XIX happens to appear in a number of other texts both in and away from Palenque (Figure 105). According to several writers (Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993:94-95; M. Coe and Kerr 1997:135), it is a variant of the **ITZ'AT** glyph used as a designation for scribes and artisans (D. Stuart 1989), which otherwise depicts the supernatural monkey-scribe patron first identified by Michael Coe (1977). The resemblence between the two is slight, however. Both glyphs routinely take the suffixes **-ti** or **-ta**, but the head signs never truly substitute in any known setting. I therefore prefer to see the banded bird at Palenque and elsewhere as a distinct term, standing for some undeciphered title applied to important priests or members of the royal court.

This unknown title has certain vague but interesting structural similarities to *ajaw*, the generic term for "lord" or "noble." For example, it is in some cases the "office" into which noblemen can sometimes be seated, as recorded on the famed wooden box from the area of Tortuguero (Figure 106). There the inscription states that one year after the accession of the local Tortuguero king Ik' Muy Muwaan, a man named Aj K'ax Bahlam assumed the banded bird office, presumably as a subordinate. At Seibal, for example, the bird occurs with the prefix **K'UHUL-** in a glyph that structurally, at least, resembles an Emblem Glyph (Figure 107). It names the associated nobleman as a "holy" member of some larger status or station, much as in the ubiquitous term *k'uhul ajaw*. The same combination of *k'uhul* with the banded bird is found in much earlier texts from Caracol and Copan. In addition, the paired deities known as the Paddlers also take the bird title in inscriptions from the neighboring sites of Ixtutz and Sacul, where they are called the **NAAH-5-CHAN "Bird"-ti** in place of the far more common place name title *Naahho'chan Ajaw*, "Lord(s) of Naahho'chan ('the First Five Heavens'?)" (Stuart and Houston 1994:71) (Figure 108). Evidently, at certain sites and at certain times, the banded bird came to be used in a way similar to *ajaw*, although it must have held some important distinction from such a very general term for elites.

Even though I doubt earlier suggestions that this title is an alternate spelling of *itz'at*, I admit to having no alternative reading. The common suffixes **-ti** or **-ta** clearly serve as phonetic complements for



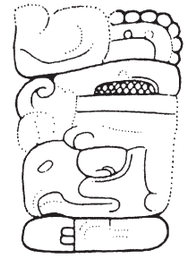
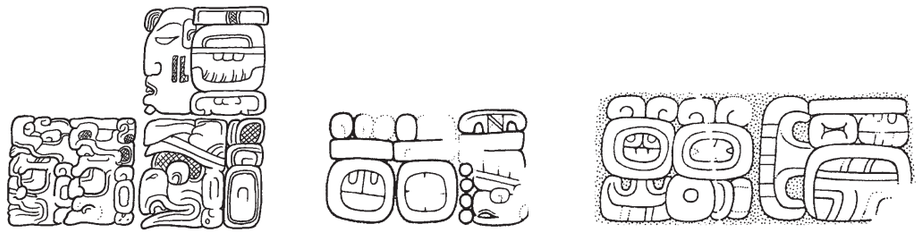


Figure 107. The banded bird title at Seibal with the prefix *Ch'uhul*, "Holy": (a) Stela 7, A1-A4 (drawing by Ian Graham from Graham 1996:25), (b) Stela 6, B6b (ibid.:23).



a b c

Figure 108. A parallel use of the "banded bird" and *ajaw* from titles for the Paddler Gods: (a) Sacul, Stela 1, B6-C6 (inked from a field drawing by Ian Graham, CMHI), (b) Ixkun, St. 2, C12, D12 (from Graham 1980:141), (c) Tonina, M.42, pD, pE (from Graham and Mathews 1996:90).

the logogram, but no other clues to the banded bird sign's value are apparent. Two examples cited at Tortuguero represent the distinctive headscarf alone, without the bird's head, and suffixed by **-ta** (Figure 105c, e). This distinctive headscarf is sometimes found on human portraits, although it seems more common in Early Classic representations such as the Uaxactun murals, where it may be a diagnostic costume element for holders of this title (Figure 109).

Returning to Palenque, there are a number of possible banded bird titles cited on the tablet known as the K'an Tok Panel. Uncovered in excavations in Group XVI, behind and to the north of the Temple of the Cross (González Cruz and Bernal Romero 2000), this late tablet records a series of consecutive accessions into the status represented by the banded bird title. The first occurred in the remote beginnings of Palenque's dynasty, during the fifth-century reign of K'uk' Bahlam I, and at least nine successive holders of this title are named, leading up to the time of the panel's dedication. In each instance a Palenque king "oversees" (*u-kab-j-iiy*) the accession event.[43]

The term for the office in all of these accession records is unusual, but I believe it to be related, perhaps even a graphic variant, of the banded bird. The headscarf element is

[43] The dates on the K'an Tok panel have been reconstructed by Mathews as:

8.19.19. 3. 0	7 Ajaw 18 Muwan
9. 0. 9. 5. 9	3 Muluk 7 Muwan
9. 1. 5. 5.11	6 Chuwen 19 Sak
9. 3.13.15. 7	10 Manik' 15 Ch'en
9. 8.10. 5. 8	8 Lamat 1 Keh
9. 9. 6. 3. 4	4 K'an 17 Sek
9.14. 0. 9.15	6 Men 3 Yaxk'in
9.15.10.10.13	8 Ben 16 Kumk'u
9.16.16.15. 9	13 Muluk 2 K'ayab
9.16.17.15. 4	4 K'an 12 Pax

I suggest a slightly different (and less complete) reconstruction of the dates as:

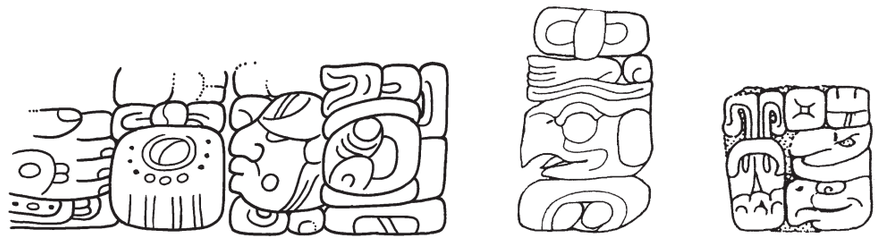
?	
9. 1. 5. 5.11	6 Chuwen 19 Sak
?	
9. 3.13.15. 7	10 Manik' 15 Ch'en
?	? Lamat 1 Yax?
9. 9.12.12. 4	4 Kan 7 Mak
9.14. 7. 0.15	6 Men 13 K'ank'in
9.15.10.10.13	8 Ben 16 Kumk'u
9.16.16.15. 9	13 Muluk 2 K'ayab



a b

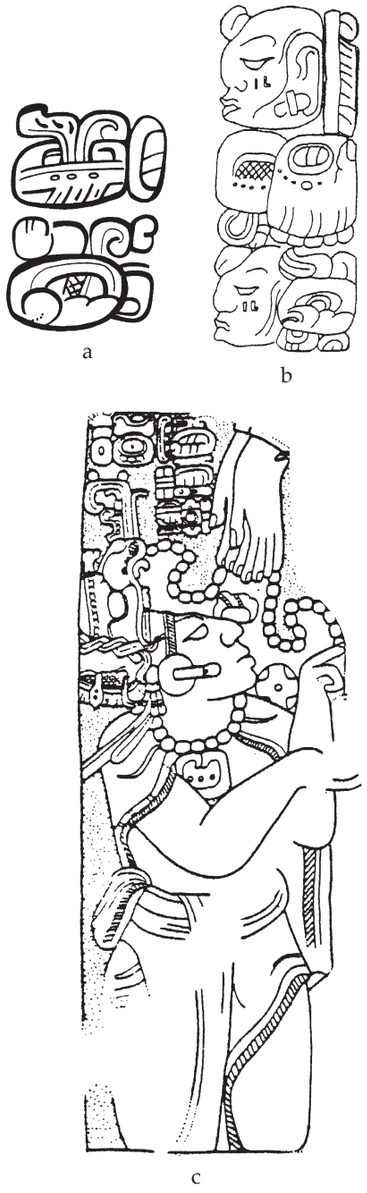
Figure 109. Examples of the brimmed headscarf in Early Classic Maya art: (a) incised drawing on a vessel from Río Azul (drawing by David Stuart, based on a photograph by George Stuart; see Adams 1999:Fig 3-26), (b) Uaxactun murals from Structure B-XIII (from Morley 1946:Pl. 50).

readily discernible as a superfix. Moreover, the main element below the superfix is known elsewhere to alternate with the very same bird head from the title. The connection seems further strengthened by the affixation shared by both glyphs (Figure 110), including the very unusually preposed term *ajaw* (Figure 110c). The equivalence is also strongly supported by the citation in the K'an Tok inscription of Janab Ajaw as the noble who acceded into this position on 9.14.7.0.15 6 Men 13 Kankin, under the auspices of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam. He was, it will be recalled, the principal figure who bears a variant of the banded bird title on the Temple XIX platform, and there again in combination with **AJAW**. Unfortunately, the complex variants and affixation patterns (both **-ta** and **-wa** are common) leave little room to suggest a good phonetic reading for the banded bird.



a b c

Figure 110. Comparison of the office cited on the K'an Tok panel with the "banded bird" title: (a) K'an Tok panel (C9-D9), (b) T. XVIII stucco glyph (drawing by Linda Schele), (c) T. XVI stucco glyph (drawing by Mark Van Stone).



a b c

Figure 111. A possibly related office term from Palenque and Yaxchilan: (a) glyphs from an inscribed obsidian blade, Temple of the Foliated Cross, Palenque (drawing by Lucia Henderson, after Ruz Lhuillier 1958:Lam. LII), (b) woman's name (*Ix Ajpayk'ab*) with title, from Palenque censer stand (from Schele and Mathews 1979), (c) kneeling lord with title in caption above, from Yaxchilan, Stela 7 (drawing by Ian Graham).

The precise role of this office remains obscure, yet we find a possible variant of the banded bird at both Palenque and Yaxchilan in association with attendant lords and nobles, much as we find in Temple XIX (Figure 111). One sculpture from Dos Pilas may also provide a telling clue. Panel 19 (Figure 112) depicts a bloodletting ceremony by a child, evidently the son of the local ruler we call Ruler 3 (Houston 1993:115). Kneeling before the child and holding a stingray spine is a man named *Sakjal Hix*, who carries in his name phrase the banded bird title. He thus holds the ritual implement at the center of the ceremony, much as Janab Ajaw at Palenque holds the royal headband before the seated king. In this light, perhaps it is significant that Group XVI, where the tablet was discovered, lies adjacent to the Tablet of the Cross, as if it were an ancillary building of some sort. With its many rooms and apparently specialized spaces, one wonders if the Group XVI complex served as a place for the storage and keeping of ritual objects and implements used in the ceremonial activities of the Cross Group.

The Historical Characters

The numerous individuals depicted on the two sides of the Temple XIX platform present the most detailed view known of Palenque's royal court. Curiously most of them are still mysterious characters, and their specific roles within the court society are difficult if not impossible to discern. Obviously there is an important hierarchy indicated among the participants in the accession scene, in particular, where Janab Ajaw seems to be singled out as the most prominent official of all. He actively "installs" K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb as ruler—a rare and important clue about the role of political subordinates in the actual ceremony of inauguration. Also of key importance is the protagonist of many of Temple XIX's inscriptions, Yok ? Tal, although his relationship with the king as his *yajaw k'ahk'* remains as mysterious as ever.

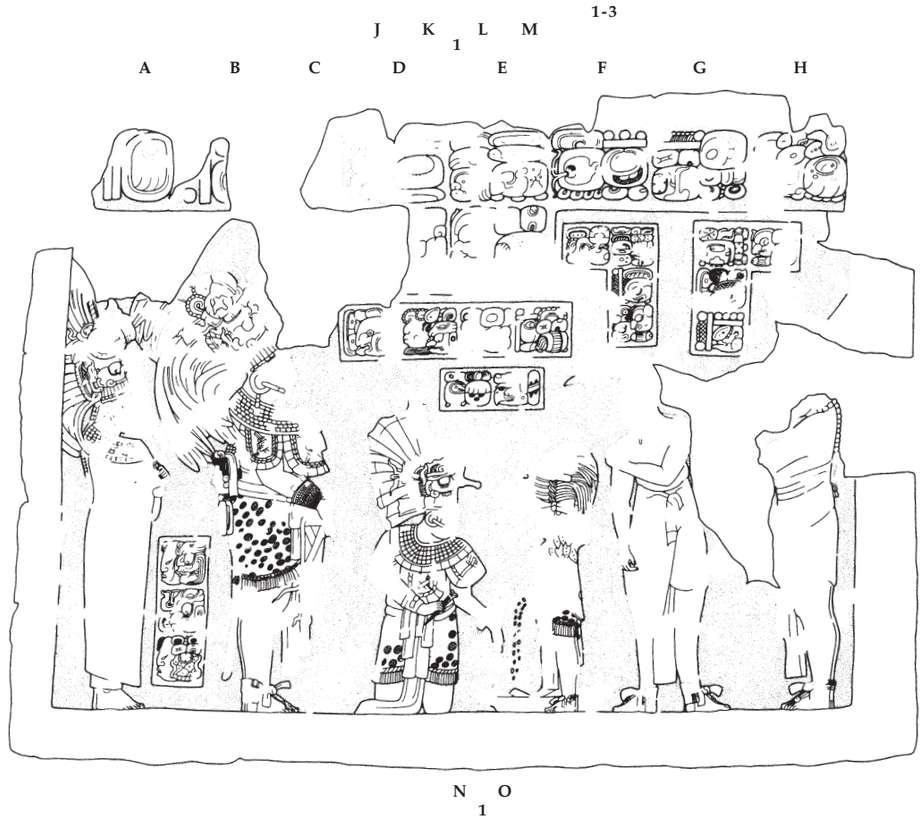


Figure 112. Dos Pilas, Panel 19 (drawing by David Stuart, from Houston 1993:Fig.4-19)

Perhaps most intriguing of all is Salaj Bolon, the junior noble who participated in several of the house dedication ceremonies, and who is depicted on the west side "receiving the rope." I suspect Salaj Bolon will emerge as a major historical figure in the future history of the kingdom, perhaps even as a successor to Upakal K'inich. This brings up the final question of why Upakal K'inich is not depicted among the attendants on the throne, given his apparent proximity to K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, his portrait on the stucco panel, and also his prominence in nearby Temple XXI. No good explanation comes to mind, except perhaps that of the two temples dedicated at this time, Temples XIX and XXI, Upakal K'inich was more closely affiliated with the latter. These all are difficult issues that hopefully will be sorted out through discoveries of new texts and historical art.



Portrait A from the Temple XIX platform, south face.

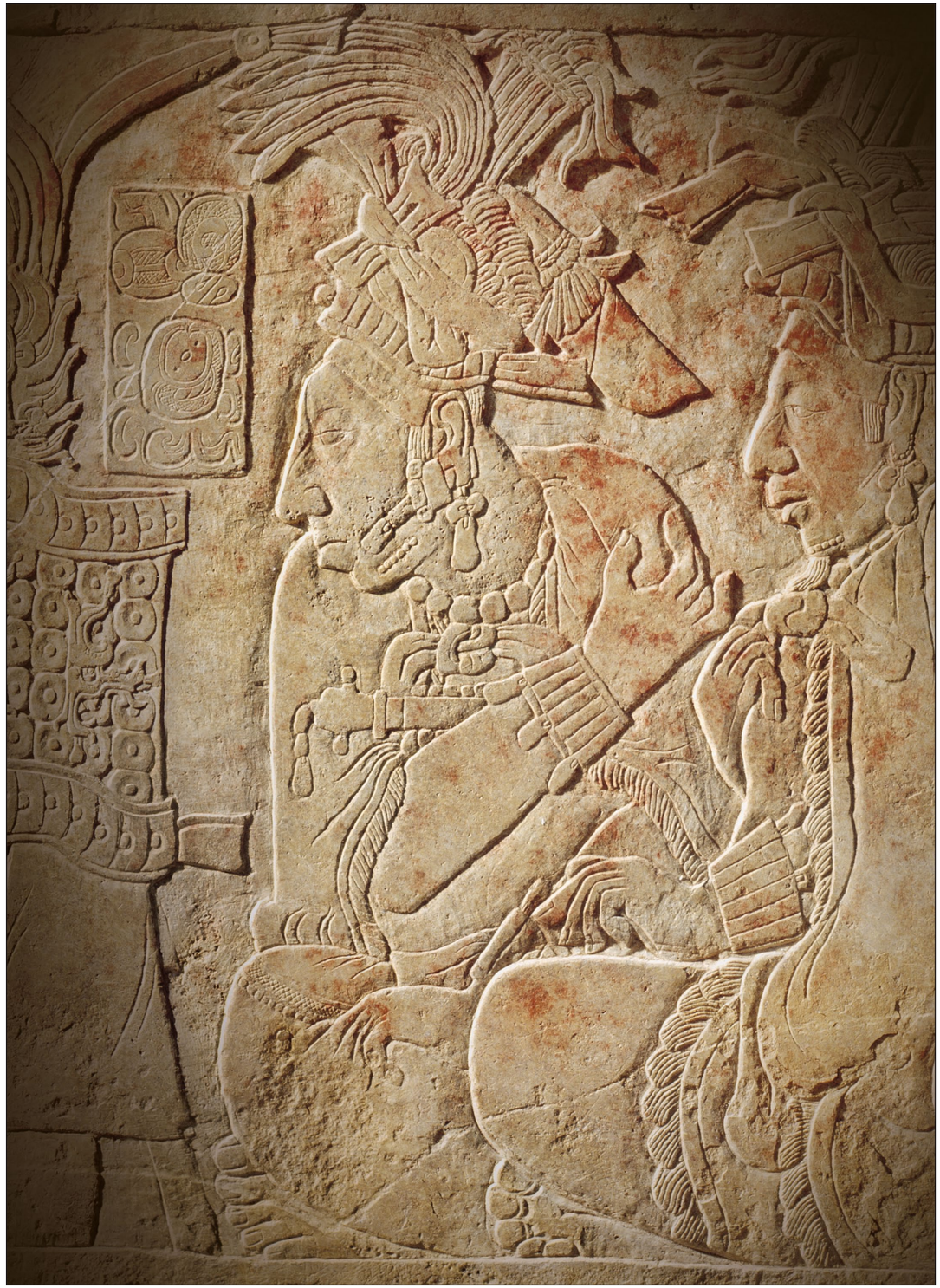


Portrait B from the Temple XIX platform, south face.



Portrait C from the Temple XIX platform, south face.

Portrait D from the Temple XIX platform, south face.



Portrait E from the Temple XIX platform, south face.



Portrait F from the Temple XIX platform, south face.



Portrait G from the Temple XIX platform, south face.



Portrait H from the Temple XIX platform, west face.

Portrait I from the Temple XIX platform, west face.

Portrait J from the Temple XIX platform, west face.

Chapter 5.

K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb: His Name Glyphs and Historical Setting



The royal protagonist of the Temple XIX inscriptions is K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, who reigned from 9.14.10.4.2 9 Ik' 5 Kayab (December 30, A.D. 721) to some time after 9.15.5.0.0 10 Ajaw 8 Ch'en (July 22, 736), the final date recorded on the platform and the latest associated with him. He was a significant Palenque ruler, yet thus far has seemed somewhat less prominent than his predecessors who built many of the major well-preserved buildings of the site's center. The excavations of Temples XIX and XXI now bring K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb into a more prominent light, and there is good reason to believe that future excavations in still-anonymous structures around Palenque will reveal more about this king and the poorly understood time in which he lived and reigned.

Before the discoveries in Temple XIX our principle sources of information about this ruler were a handful of texts found in the Palace, including the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, in addition to two inscriptions from Temple XVIII. His accession date was identified long ago by Berlin (1968). Previously, his only known portrait was the Tablet of the Slaves (Wald 1997), where he is shown flanked by his mother and father (Figure 113). As we have seen, his father Tiwol Chan Mat was not himself a king, but probably a son of K'inich Janab Pakal nonetheless. This of course raises a number of questions about the family connections between K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb and the previous three rulers who, if we are correct in our reconstruction of kin relations, were his grandfather (K'inich Janab Pakal) and two uncles (K'inich Kan Bahlam and K'inich K'an Joy Chitam). K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb is therefore an enigmatic king in many ways, and the new texts from Temple XIX have helped to resolve at least a few of the puzzling issues surrounding him. One of the more important new developments is a refined reading of his name glyph, which as presented here is slightly modified from previous decipherments.

The Royal Name

Heinrich Berlin called this ruler "Subject C" when he established the essential outline of



Figure 113. The Tablet of the Slaves (drawing by Merle Greene Robertson).

Palenque's Late Classic dynasty in three brilliant studies (Berlin 1959, 1965, 1968).[44] Berlin also correctly maintained that he was the same lord or ruler affiliated with Temple XVIII, who acceded to office on 9.14.10.4.2 9 Ik' 5 K'ayab. In their later study of the Palenque dynasty, Mathews and Schele (1974) used the name "Lord Chaacal" for this same king, based upon the main "cauac" element (read here as **ku**) and its supposed relationships to the deity Chaak. Subsequent studies revealed that two Early Classic Palenque rulers also had the same

[44] Mathews and Schele (1974) summarized the rulers of Palenque's Late Classic and gave them working names in Ch'ol Mayan, but Berlin should receive fair credit for having previously set forth the essentials of the dynastic history, which he published in three important papers spanning a decade (Berlin 1959, 1965, 1968). It is difficult to explain why Berlin has received so little acknowledgment for these seminal contributions, except to point out that he was customarily dry and understated in his presentation. He nevertheless was very explicit in identifying name glyphs of the major Early and Late Classic rulers as well as their likely accession dates. It is also worth noting, perhaps, that Proskouriakoff's personal copy of Berlin's 1968 paper on the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs (now in the offices of the Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions Project at the Peabody Museum) reveals her own agreement with Berlin. Among her handwritten annotations she wrote "accession" by the three inaugural dates of that inscription.

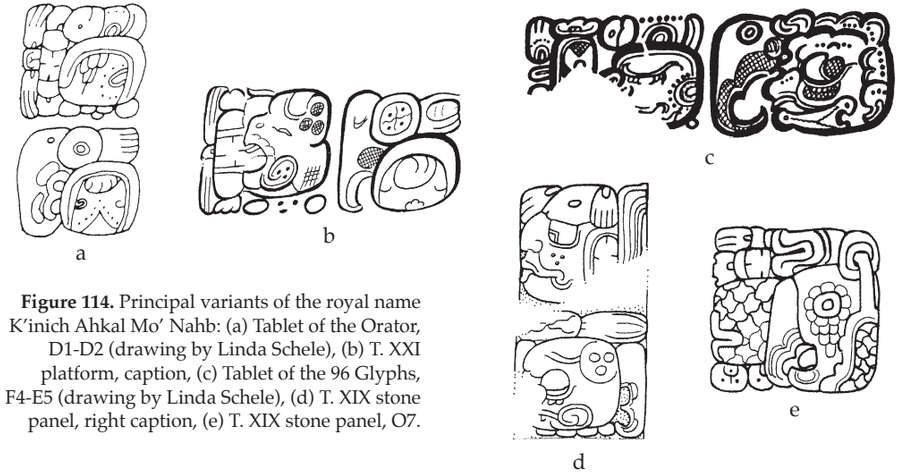


Figure 114. Principal variants of the royal name K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb: (a) Tablet of the Orator, D1-D2 (drawing by Linda Schele), (b) T. XXI platform, caption, (c) Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, F4-E5 (drawing by Linda Schele), (d) T. XIX stone panel, right caption, (e) T. XIX stone panel, O7.

royal name (sans the *K'inich* honorific prefix), resulting in a threesome of Palencano rulers often cited in the literature as "Chaacal I," "Chaacal II," and "Chaacal III."

The Late Classic king's name has four essential components, each of which may have a few variants (Figure 114):

(1) The initial *K'inich* honorific prefix used by all Late Classic Palenque kings after K'inich Janab Pakal. This may take the form of a simple prefix or, at times, a head of the sun god with the **K'INICH** affix attached to its back side. As we have seen, this can be slightly elaborated as *Yajawte' K'inich*.

(2) Customarily the sign sequence **a-ku-la**, which can be replaced by **AHK**-**la** using the turtle head logogram or, as in the newer examples, a turtle carapace for **AHK**. The alternate logograms serve as wonderful confirmation of the **a-ku** decipherment as "turtle," which I first proposed some years ago (D. Stuart 1987a), replacing the syllabic spelling for *ahk*, "turtle," as shown in several other royal names of the Classic period. The disharmonic spelling **a-ku** is perhaps used to indicate the unusual nature of the internal vowel of the root *ahk* (Houston, Robertson, and Stuart 1998). In the Palenque name, the presence of the **-la** suffix probably points to the pronunciation *ahk-al*, rather than *ahk-ul*, since the **ku** syllable seems intrinsic to the spelling of the "turtle" root (although it should be said that this point is now being debated among several epigraphers). We can therefore transcribe this portion of the name as **AHK-la**, with the **-la** sign "reversed" to represent one of the common -V*l* derivational suffixes.

(3) In the majority of examples the next sign represents a parrot's beak, shown sometimes as a suffix to **AHK-la**. This hooked beak element has long been read as **a**, based on a few similar examples of the familiar T229, but there are now strong indications that it is a distinct element. As we have seen, T229 **a** is common in the name of this ruler in spellings of **a-ku**, but its form is consistently differentiated from the hook-like form. Interestingly, in the inscriptions of Copan, the hooked beak sign is used as a shorthand form of **MO'**, "macaw," as in the place name *Mo' Witz*, "Macaw Mountain." I had considered that perhaps **MO'** was the true reading of this beak in the Palenque name, yet confirmation did not appear until the discovery of the Temple XIX texts, where an obvious macaw's head appears as a fuller version of the beak. We can therefore read *Ahkal* and *Mo'* as the first two parts of the name.

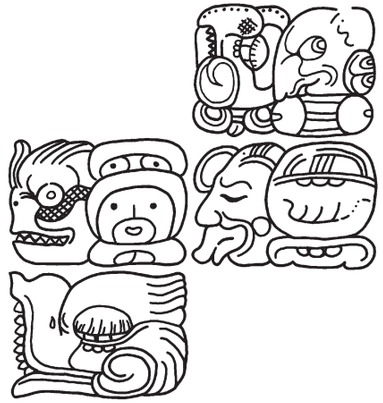


Figure 115. The birth of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, from the sanctuary jamb tablets of Temple XVIII (drawing by Lucia Henderson).

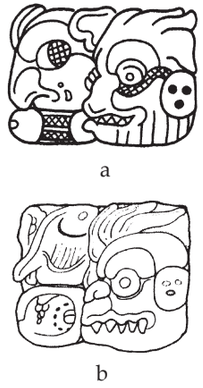


Figure 116. The pre-accession name of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb from Palenque, Temple XVIII: (a) sanctuary jamb, (b) stucco text (drawings by Lucia Henderson).

(4) Lastly we find the common grouping **na-bi**, usually directly after the **MO'** beak. This is replaced in other contexts by a logogram read **NAHB**, for "pool, lake." The logographic forms of **NAHB** all emphasize the waterlily image, usually as part of a larger "spotted winal" form, the superfixed blossom of which (always read in final position) can alone serve as **NAHB**. In the Temple XIX examples exhibiting the **AHK** in turtle shell form, we find the macaw head draped by tendrils of a water lily pad, providing a more iconographic image of the sign.

Taken as a whole, then, we have the reasonably accurate name *K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb*, possibly with the literal and utterly confounding meaning of "Great Sun Turtle-Macaw Pool."

Historical Notes on K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb

The birth date of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb appears prominently in Temple XVIII, where it opens the inscription of the sanctuary jamb tablets, on the northern side (Figure 115). This is 9.12.6.5.8 3 Lamat 6 Sak, a date first identified by Mathews and Schele (1974). The name of the ruler is in its "pre-accession" form, written in that inscription simply as the head of a crested lizard (Figure 116a). This name also occurs among the jumbled glyphs of the Temple XVIII stucco text (Schele and Mathews 1979) with the interesting addition of the prefixed syllables **chu-lu-ku** (Figure 116b), seemingly for *chuluk*. In Ch'orti', the same word (*churuk*) is a noun or adjective for "wrinkle(d)." Both this and the glyphic spelling are perhaps related to the Yucatec word *tolok*, meaning "lizard." While *tolok* and *chuluk* may seem quite dissimilar, they do display well-attested sound correspondences between Yucatecan and Ch'olan phonologies (*t*/*ch* and *o*/*u*). I would stress that this analysis remains tentative, but for the present I would like to entertain the possibility that the young future king's name was in part *Chuluk*, "(Wrinkled) Lizard."

The birth passage from the Temple XVIII jambs includes an important reference to the father of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb (Ringle 1996), Tiwol Chan Mat (or some slight variation on this), who we have already discussed somewhat in Chapter 2 in connection with the appear-



Figure 117. The parentage statement from the Temple XXI platform.

ance of his name on the stone panel of the Temple XIX pier. The mother of the king is not named in this birth passage of the Temple XVIII jambs (she does appear later), but her name glyph was included in the stucco inscription of the building. She also appears in a full parentage statement for K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb recently discovered in the inscription of the Temple XXI platform (Bernal Romero 2002) (Figure 117). She is also named as the right-hand figure portrayed on the Tablet of the Slaves, in the company of her son, in the center of the composition, and Tiwol Chan Mat, at left (Wald 1997).

Tiwol Chan Mat was never a ruler of Palenque, but there is strong circumstantial evidence that he was the third son of K'inich Janab Pakal, and thus the younger brother of the two noted siblings who ruled in the wake of Pakal (Ringle 1996). Tiwol Chan Mat died on 9.12.8.9.18 7 Etz'nab 6 Muwan, before K'inich Janab Pakal died, and when the young K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb was only two years of age (or exactly 2.3.10). Support for the three-brothers scenario comes from the meager remains of the stucco scene from Temple XVIII, originally decorating the wall below the lengthy fallen text (Figure 118). Blom (1982:Fig.81; Blom and La Farge 1926-7:176-177) first recorded the portions still adhering to the back wall of the temple, and virtually nothing was left of the scene except for the crossed legs of a seated lord and the head of another figure to the left. The glyphic captions surrounding these and other figures were better preserved, fortunately, and using them we can readily identify a few of the participants in the scene.

Moving from center to right (and using Ringle's [1996:Fig.9] designations) the captions are:

J1, K1: **AJ-pi-tzi-[2]la-OHL ch'o-ko**
L1-3: **[3]-?N-ma-ta ch'o-ko**
M1-2: **[?] CHAN-ma-ta ch'o-ko**

Note that all names are accompanied by the designation *ch'ok*, used for lords who have yet to reach their potential status as kings or, more like its use in modern languages, in reference to children. The first of the captions is an unusual spelling of the common youth name used for K'inich Kan Bahlam, seen for example in the captions of the smaller of

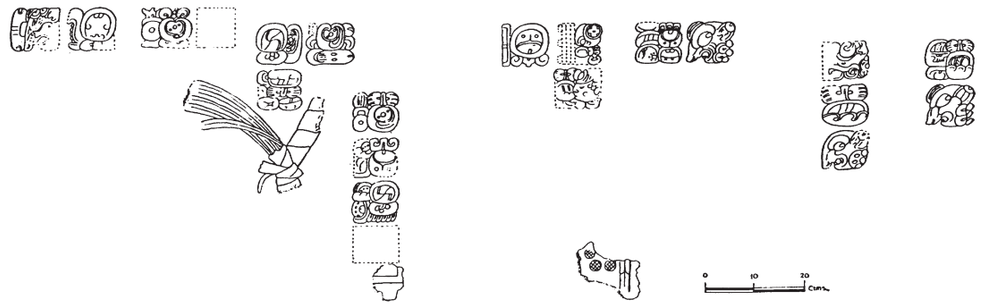


Figure 118. Remains of the scene from the rear wall of Temple XVIII, below the original hieroglyphic text (from Ruz Lhuillier 1958:Fig.18).

the two figures on the Cross tablets. The second name was recognized by Ringle (1996:56) as the youth name of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam, and the third as the name of Tiwol Chan Mat. The order of the captions indicates that portraits of these three brothers were included in the scene, running left to right from the eldest to the youngest. The seated figure in the center may well have been K'inich Janab Pakal, but no caption survived to confirm this. The evidence is indirect, yet I believe the grouping of the names strongly supports Ringle's interpretation that Tiwol Chan Mat was the youngest son of Pakal, who died prematurely.

The date within the scene is 5 Ajaw 18 K'ayab, which must correspond 9.12.6.12.0. This comes only two years before the death of Tiwol Chan Mat and near the close of the long reign of K'inich Janab Pakal. All three brothers were adults at this time, and Tiwol Chan Mat's own son—the future K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb—had only been born a scant few months before. Unfortunately the verb after the date is missing, but the subject in the next glyph is **ma-ta-la-AJAW-wa**, "the Mata(wi)l lord(s)."

Evidently some of the "captions" in the scene record spoken words, rather like we find in some throne scenes on Maya vessels. The three surviving glyphs of column G, placed directly between the seated lord and the figure to his left, are:

G1: **ti-ma-ja**
G2: **a-wo-la**
G3: **a-TZ'AK-bu-ji**

The expression is related to others found in inscriptions at Palenque and elsewhere, and is elaborated from *tim ohl*, "to satisfy someone." The Yucatecan counterpart is *tem ol*, meaning literally to "satisfy one's heart." Here the glyphs spell the passive form *tihm-aj a-wohl*, "you are pleased, satisfied." The next glyph is somewhat more opaque, but likely gives the derived transitive form *a-tz'ak-bu-ji*, "you put them in order." I interpret the larger statement as *tihm-aj a-wohl a-tz'ak-bu-ji*…, "you are pleased (that) you order them," and suggest that this utterance pertains directly to the three brothers shown lined up within the scene. It is not too far-fetched to consider that the scene represents the formal ordering of the succession of the three sons of K'inich Janab Pakal, five or so years short of his demise.

The Temple XVIII jamb inscription continues after the record of the king's birth with a mention of two pre-accession events in the ruler's life, including an important ceremony he underwent on 9.13.2.9.0 5 Ajaw 8 Ch'en, at the age of about fourteen. The "deer hoof" verbal

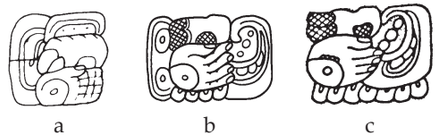


Figure 119. The "deer hoof" (*k'al may?*) event in Palenque's texts: (a) Tablet of the Cross, C3, (b) T. XVIII jamb (drawing by Lucia Henderson), (c) Palace Tablet, E8 (drawing by Linda Schele).

glyph that marks this ritual is known in other Palenque inscriptions, where it consistently appears with young rulers-to-be well before their seatings in office (Figure 119) (see Joyce [2000:126] for a recent discussion of such events). There is now specific evidence that may lead to a reading of the event glyph. The verb usually shows a **K'AL** ("binding") hand (see D. Stuart 1996) with the deer hoof sign, which is almost certainly read as **MAY**.[45] These two elements provide the essential components of the expression, but here and in other spellings we find sign affixes that suggest a fuller reading of *k'al mayij*, "binding of the sacrifice." The ritual term *k'al mayij* is one of a few expressions from the Classic sources that record youthful initiations into the complex of royal ritual. "Binding" is a highly important term in this context, for it would seem to imply a significant cyclical or repetitious character to the ceremony, much as in terms like *k'al-tuun*, "stone-binding," or *k'al-huun*, "headband-binding." The term *mayij* "offering, sacrifice," seems to have been an ancient term for certain types of bloodletting, including the passing of cords through the tongue.[46] Another significant youth ceremony is *yax ch'ab*, "the first penance" or "the first creation," recorded at Caracol and Tikal, among a few other sites. The extraordinary scene from Panel 19 at Dos Pilas (see Figure 112), showing a young boy letting blood from his genitals, may depict just such a ceremony.

The years leading up to K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb's inauguration at the age of forty-three are poorly understood, but they were evidently a time of some instability in the dynastic history of Palenque. A key event of this period was the capture of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam at the hands of the Tonina ruler, as commemorated by Monument 122 at the victor's site (Figure 120). The date is somewhat difficult to determine from the surviving calendrical record on this Tonina panel (see Schele 1992:97), and none of the possible Long Count placements fits nicely within the months before K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb's own accession. However, Schele and others have opted for 9.13.19.13.3 13 Ak'bal 16 Yax as the most likely placement. Curiously, this precedes by nine years the latest date we can associate with the name of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam, 9.14.8.14.15 9 Men 3 Yax, which corresponds to the dedication of House AD, a gallery on the north side of the Palace. Stranger still, the Palace Tablet records

[45] The **MAY** value for the deerhoof was suggested many years ago by Schele (personal communication 1979). I do not believe she ever published the reasoning for it, but it was based mainly on the meaning of *may* as a deer or horse's hoof in Yucatecan languages. Since then evidence based on variant spellings of *mayij*, "offering, sacrifice," has confirmed the **MAY** reading in my view. Moreover, the deerhoof appears in the possessed noun **U-MAY-ya**, for *u-may*, "his tobacco snuff." This glyph marked at least one small ceramic flask (a so-called "poison bottle") that clearly served as a snuff bottle.

[46] This association is confirmed by Yaxchilan Stela 35, where the phrase *u-baah ti-mayij*, or "(It is) her image in the act of *mayij*," describes the bloodletting depicted in the accompanying scene below. The references to *mayij* sacrifices at Palenque may refer to this specific method of bloodletting, but this is difficult to confirm. At any rate, it should be remembered that the rope-and-tongue method was not the exclusive practice of females, for young men are shown engaged in the sacrifice on a polychrome vessel now at Dumbarton Oaks (K2783). *Mayij* also seems to serve as a noun referring to instruments used in such sacrifices. At Yaxchilan, a bone "awl" from the burial of Lady K'abal Xook is called a *mayijil baak*, "sacrifice bone" (spelled **MAY-ji-li ba-ki**). And perhaps related to this is the wooden box from the Tortuguero region, labeled as *y-otot u-mayij* (**yo-OTOT-ti U-ma-yi-ji**). Interestingly, the spelling from Stela 35 at Yaxchilan is **MAY-yi-hi,** where the distinction between **hi** and **ji** seems clouded, as in several other spellings from the later part of the Late Classic.

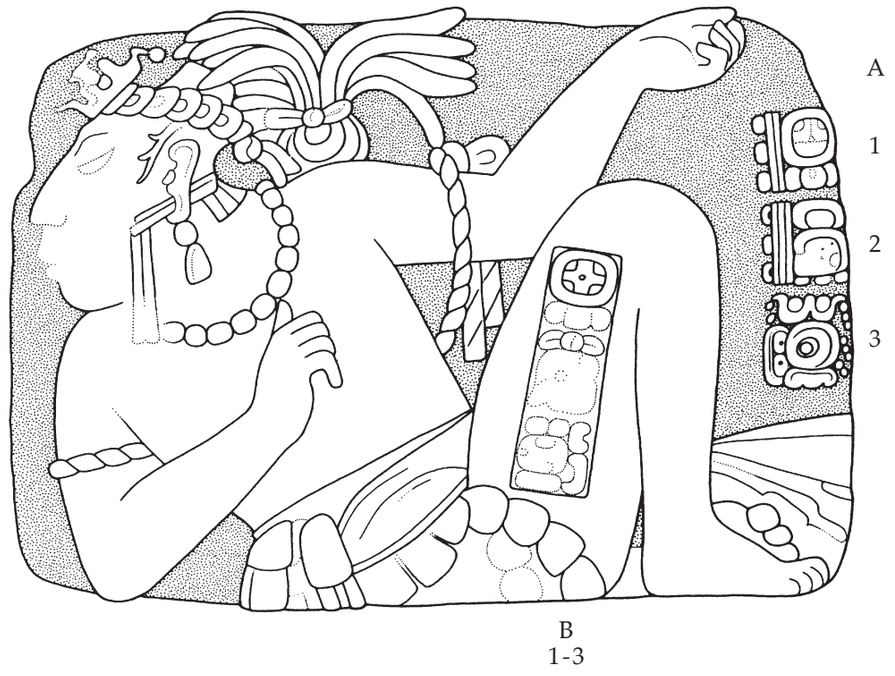


Figure 120. Tonina, Monument 122 (drawing by Ian Graham from Graham and Mathews 1999:153).

that the building is the "house of" a figure or entity named *Ux Yop Huun*, "Three Leaves Headband" (Schele [1979, 1992] refers to him as "3 Jester God" or "Xoc"), with the event in some way sanctioned or overseen by K'inich K'an Joy Chitam. Lounsbury (cited in Schele 1992:97) first suggested that this was an obscure Palenque ruler who followed K'inich K'an Joy Chitam, and it is true that his "ownership" of a building in the Palace would indicate such a high status (all other houses of the Palace are "owned" by Pakal or other rulers).[47] However, nothing more is known of this character apart from the brief mentions on the Palace Tablet. He may have been an interim ruler of some sort, as Schele has suggested, but any closer understanding of his true role hinges on knowing more details of K'inich K'an Joy Chitam's demise. At present, I feel that there is enough evidence to suggest that K'inich K'an Joy Chitam was alive at the time of the House AD dedication, and that he indeed ruled for several years after his capture and display by Tonina, perhaps for a time as a vassal of that neighboring kingdom (D. Stuart 2003c).

The reign of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb spanned at least fifteen years but apparently no more than twenty. The latest date we can link with him is 9.15.5.0.0, cited at the end of the south panel text on the platform of Temple XIX. Although we lack records of his death, it is clear that his successor, Upakal K'inich Janab Pakal, reigned as early as 9.15.10.10.13. This date is cited on the "K'an Tok Panel" in connection with the accession of a "banded bird"

[47] Alternatively, Bassie-Sweet (personal communication 1999) has suggested that the "3 Jester God" name which I read as *Ux Yop Huun* refers not to a person but to a headdress. She specifically links this to the "drum major" crown depicted on the Palace Tablet, the Tablet of the Slaves, the Oval Palace Tablet, and now the Temple XIX platform.

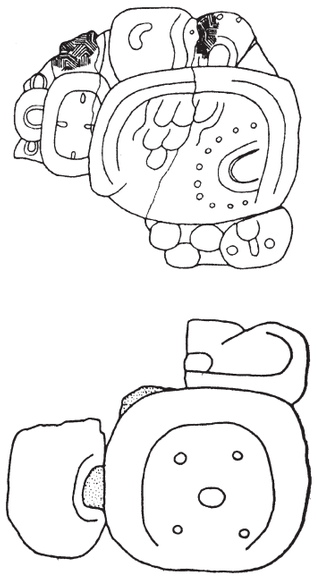


Figure 121. Stucco glyphs with the name of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, from Palenque's North Group (drawings by Linda Schele from Schele and Mathews 1979).

titleholder under the auspices of Upakal K'inich Janab Pakal. A reign of fifteen to twenty years for K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb therefore seems inescapable.

During this time he left widespread evidence of monuments, construction, and architectural modification throughout the ancient city. The southern sector of the Group of the Cross seems to hold a concentration of his buildings, including Temples XVIII and XIX. The miniature tablet fragment excavated from Group XVI, located directly behind the Temple of the Cross, bears his portrait (see Figure 95), but there is no indication that the building complex was dedicated by him. The Initial Series date on this fragment is reconstructible as 9.14.19.10.17 4 Kaban 10 Zip, and thus slightly predates the K'atun ending and the later dedication of Temples XIX and XXI. In the North Group, stucco glyphs recovered from Temple III and IV include portions of his name (Schele and Mathews 1979:No.575) (Figure 121). A "tomb" glyph also excavated from Temple III (ibid.:No. 598) strongly indicates this building was a funerary structure. The stucco is far too incomplete to suggest that the building holds the tomb of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb himself, but the possibility remains intriguing.[48]

Within the Palace, both House E and the courtyard in front of it saw modifications by K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. An extremely important hieroglyphic text citing his accession and important mythological information was painted along the upper back wall of House E, above the Oval Palace Tablet and the principal accession throne (see Figure 59). In the courtyard outside, at the base of the tower, were also found the Tablets of the Orator and Scribe, both of which cite K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb's name. I doubt either of the kneeling portraits on the tablets is of him, however, for both seem to be posed as supplicants gazing upward at a more authoritative figure. The glyphs on these tablets, linked by speech scrolls to the portraits, seem actually to record quotations addressed to K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb (i.e., "it is your creation, your darkness…").

[48] The three temples of the North Group may relate to the Triad deities, but the lack of textual evidence makes this no more than supposition at this stage. Nevertheless, the temples are all oriented directly and purposefully toward the Cross Group and the Otulum spring behind Temple XIX.

Apart from architectural credits, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb seems to have been quite active militarily. The Tablet of the Slaves is the key document in this regard, recording three victories against neighboring centers, all conducted by the Palencano *sajal* named Chak Suutz'. One of the targeted sites is named *K'ina'* (**K'IN-ni-a**), which Zender (2002) has suggested corresponds to a site affiliated with Piedras Negras. As Zender further notes, the belligerent relations with Piedras Negras are strongly indicated by the mention on the Tablet of the Orator of a sacrifice or captive display event involving a *sajal* of the Piedras Negras king Yopnal Ahk (Proskouriakoff's Ruler 3). Chak Suutz' is again named in connection with this episode.

K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb was the father of K'inich K'uk' Bahlam, a connection made explicit in the inscription on the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs (Figure 122). The mother of this later king, the presumed spouse of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, is named as well, but her name is somewhat difficult to read: **IX-?-? IX-sa-ja-la-²ju**. Perhaps the second of the two names is *Ix Sajal Juj*. She is not named in any other inscription, to my knowledge.

The inscriptions of this ruler's time name several other key individuals. Not the least among these is Chak Suutz', who is celebrated as a *sajal* or war captain in the inscription of the Tablet of the Slaves (see Schele 1991). Curiously, however, Chak Suutz', important as he evidently was, is *not* among those shown in attendance at the crowning ceremony for the king on the Temple XIX platform.

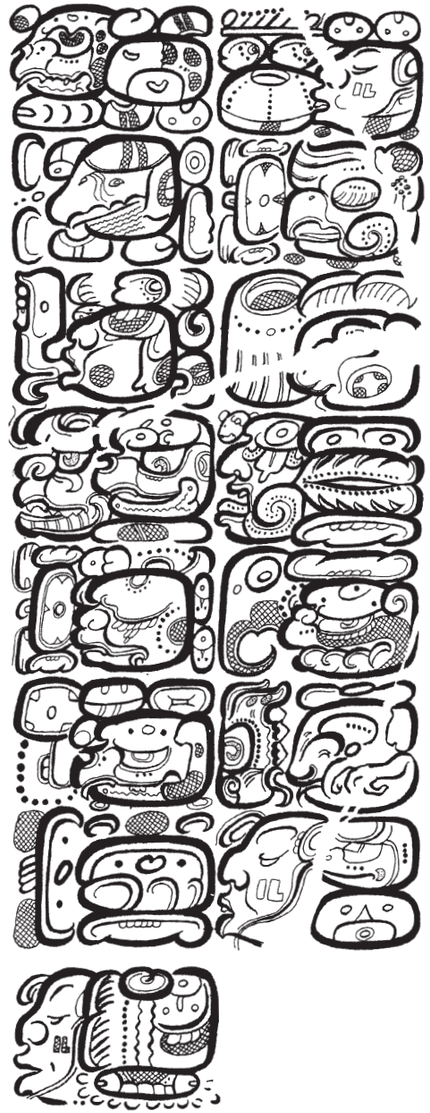


Figure 122. Parentage statement from the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, citing the spouse and son of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb (drawing by Linda Schele).

Chapter 6.

A New Look at Palenque's Mythology



It is difficult to overstate the importance of the religious and cosmological information gleaned from the inscriptions of Temple XIX. The platform text in particular relates mythic episodes not found in other inscriptions from Palenque or elsewhere in the Maya world. Even the mentions of familiar gods and creation events contain new bits of information and force revisions of what we long thought we knew about Palenque's mythology and Maya cosmogony in general. This chapter touches on many of these new strands of evidence, although it must be said that many aspects of these new discoveries will be expanded and revisited by others for many years to come.

The opening statement of GI's accession to rulership is perhaps the most important new portion of the mythic narrative as now reconstructed, for it considerably predates the "deep time" history related in the three temples of the Cross Group, each devoted to one of the members of the Palenque Triad. In order to place this new event in some meaningful context, let us first review the story of the Triad as it gradually emerged over the last few decades through the pioneering works of Berlin, Kelley, Lounsbury, Schele, and others.

The study of Palenque's creation texts (I think a good way to characterize them as a whole) began in earnest with Berlin's (1963) identification of the three gods of the so-called Palenque Triad (Figure 123), whom he labeled simply as "GI," "GII," and "GIII" (their hieroglyphic names having been impossible to read at the time). Kelley (1965) soon thereafter discussed the births of these deities as recorded in the three temples of the Group of the Cross and helped to establish that each member of the Triad was associated with one of these temples. The Temple of the Cross and its tablet featured the god GI, the Temple of the Foliated Cross and its tablet the god GII, and the Temple of the Sun and its tablet the god GIII. Their respective birth dates, also recorded on the Temple XIX platform, are of course:

1. 18. 5. 3. 2	9 Ik' 15 Keh	GI birth
1. 18. 5. 3. 6	13 Kimi 19 Keh	GIII birth
1. 18. 5. 4. 0	1 Ajaw 13 Mak	GII birth

Kelley also noted that these birth dates pointed to likely connections between the members of the Triad and other mythical figures recorded in narratives from Central Mexico and Oaxaca. The most conspicuous of these is of course "9 Ik'" or Nine Wind, a calendar name attested in Postclassic central Mexico for the Venus deity Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl. These connections to other Mesoamerican traditions are difficult to confirm, but they nonetheless deserve



Figure 123. The Palenque Triad, from the Temple XIX platform, P5-P6.

far more attention than they have received in the past, and they will be briefly revisited throughout this chapter.

In a series of important papers, Lounsbury (1974, 1976, 1980, 1985) built on these works and began to reconstruct a narrative concerning these gods. He noted that the three birth events, spaced only days apart, indicated a probable sibling relationship among the threesome, and the prominent name of a long-lived woman in the texts of the Cross Group, "Lady Beastie" or "Lady Methuselah," was interpreted as their mother-creator (this deity is called the "Triad Progenitor" in the present study). Mentions of an earlier birth of a "GI" led Lounsbury to also propose the existence of two "GI" gods, indistinguishable by name, with the first perhaps being the father of the supernatural triplets. Lounsbury (1985) also posited that the gods GI and GIII were Classic Maya counterparts to the Hero Twins of the *Popol Vuh*, Hunahpu and Xbalanque. Schele (1979) expanded on Lounsbury's work by connecting the individual Triad gods to wider iconographic patterns in Maya art at Palenque and elsewhere. She viewed the Palenque Triad as fundamental players in Classic religion throughout the lowlands, an interpretation that came to be highly influential in many of her later works (e.g., Schele and Freidel 1988, 1990). In these reconstructions, GI and GIII—whom Lounsbury had associated with the Hero Twins—were seen as Classic Maya aspects of Venus and the Sun, respectively, and major components of royal symbolism from Preclassic times.

The Venus identification of GI stems mainly from his birth date 9 Ik' (Nine Wind), mentioned already as the calendar name of Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl, a major Venus god in Central Mexican mythology (Kelley 1965). This station of the 260-day cycle was of great symbolic importance and is used repeatedly in the Temple XIX platform inscription to draw historical parallels between GI, the Triad Progenitor, and the ruler K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. Lounsbury's view that GI was also a Classic counterpart of Hunahpu, with his own strong associations with Venus, would seem in keeping with this interpretation. However, it should be said that other conflicting evidence surrounds the astronomical identities of the Hero Twins, who are at times named as counterparts of the Sun and the Moon, rather than Venus and the Sun (M. Coe 1989; Milbrath 1999). GIII, as we shall see, is clearly an aspect of K'inich Ajaw, the sun god.

Despite its significant influence in Maya religious studies during the last two decades (e.g., Tedlock 1985, 1996), the interpretation of GI and GIII as simple counterparts of Hunahpu and Xbalanque today is difficult to sustain. Michael Coe (1989) made a simple yet definitive argument against Lounsbury's assertion by pointing out that Hunahpu and Xbalanque are commonly and explicitly depicted on Classic period vases as the so-called "Headband Twins," young mythical characters who have no iconographic associations or overlaps with GI or GIII. The complex astronomical associations of both the Hero Twins and the Triad Gods may well allow us to draw some general structural parallels between these sets of siblings, but in my view the ambiguities involved in such interpretations prevent any direct

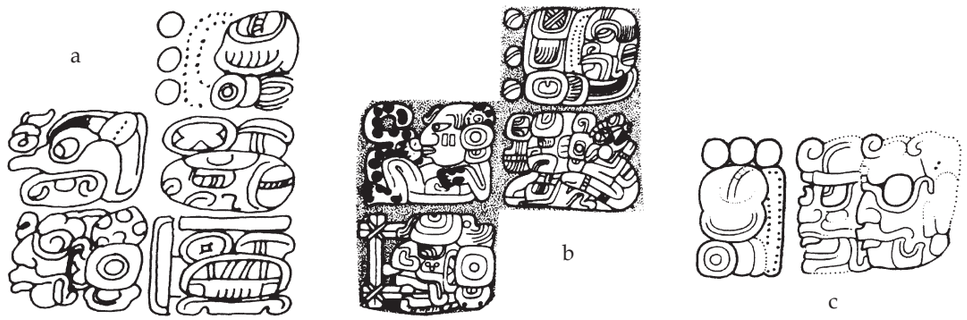


Figure 124. Triadic deities at Caracol, Tikal, and Naranjo: (a) Caracol, Stela 16 (drawing by Linda Schele), (b) Tikal, Stela 26 (from Jones and Satterthwaite 1982:Fig.44a), (c) Naranjo, Hieroglyhic Stairway 1, Step II, C2b-D2 (drawing by Ian Graham from Graham 1978:108).

correlation between the *Popol Vuh* and the mythological narrative as presented in Palenque's inscriptions.

One simple and insurmountable difficulty in efforts to link the Palenque Triad to the *Popol Vuh* stems from their near-exclusive focus on Palenque. This is understandable given the amount of sources at hand and the importance of Palenque in the epigraphic breakthroughs of the 1970s and 80s. Nonetheless, we cannot forget that other Maya sites had their own triadic groupings of deities whose identities seem very different from those at Palenque (Figure 124). At Caracol, for example, a set of three gods is mentioned on at least three different stelae, and Tikal mentions yet another set of three deities. All presumably held similar roles as supernatural "patrons" of the local dynasties, but none allow for connections to later narratives of Maya mythology. To a large degree, narratives from Classic Maya mythology were fairly localized constructs, and Palenque was no different in this respect.

Of the three Triad gods, GI seems the most important, and he is clearly the deity featured most prominently in the texts of Temple XIX. Beyond the simple fact that GI is named a great many times in these inscriptions, perhaps the clearest indication of GI's importance to Temple XIX is the dedication date of the building itself (9.15.2.7.16 9 Kib 19 K'ayab), recorded on the *alfarda*, the stone pier tablet, and on the platform. In the platform's inscription the same date is cited as the dedication day for GI's particular house or structure (*chak ..?.. naah*), with his siblings' temples dedicated a short time later. By implication, then, we can posit that Temple XIX was principally a temple oriented toward GI and the rituals that surrounded him—a fitting association given the way Temple XIX faces onto the Temple of the Cross, a far more imposing GI temple constructed by K'inich Kan Bahlam over forty years earlier. The other two Triad gods, GII and GIII, had their own new temple (or temples) dedicated together two years later, on 9.15.4.15.17 6 Kaban 5 Yaxk'in. There is now good reason to believe that this may be Temple XXI, Temple XIX's "twin" recently excavated in full by Arnoldo González and his colleagues from INAH. At least the 6 Kaban date is featured in that temple, in the text of the platform that is so similar in design to that of Temple XIX.

The Temple XIX platform's explicit message of a shared identity between K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb and GI stands as one of the most compelling presentations of divine rulership ever encountered in Classic Maya art. On the day of his seating in office the ruler is shown wearing elements of GI's diagnostic headdress, and the history recorded in the accompanying inscription establishes the connection between creator deity and ruler. Most striking is



Figure 125. Names of GI at Palenque: (a) simple portrait version from the Tablet of the Foliated Cross, O9, (b) extended version from the Tablet of the Cross, C8-D8 (drawings by Linda Schele).

how both of them took office on the important day 9 Ik', as had the "Triad Progenitor" in the intervening time. The emphasis on GI therefore becomes more understandable if we realize that K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb relied on the story of that god to construct his own program of religious legitimation, probably after a time of considerable uneasiness in Palenque's dynastic history. GI was very much K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb's own god.

Who Was GI?

The inscription on the Temple XIX platform makes constant reference to the deity GI, and arguably he is the protagonist of the monument's narrative. GI is "impersonated" by the Palenque ruler in the main scene, his accession opens the main text on the south side, and the dedication of his "house" is a featured event in the west side's supplementary text. Clearly, then, a deep understanding of the Temple XIX inscriptions will rely in large part on knowing GI's general role in Classic Maya cosmology and religion. Yet GI remains a highly enigmatic character in Maya iconography. One reason behind this mystery is GI's apparent disappearance at the end of the Classic period, for he cannot be connected to any of the major Postclassic gods identified by Schellhas (1904) and later discussed by Taube (1992). It therefore seems very doubtful that GI can ever be understood in the context of ethnographic survivals or counterparts, in the way we are able to gain knowledge of K'inich Ajaw, Chaak, or K'awil (God K). What we can say about GI comes mainly from scattered iconographic depictions and occasional textual references.

GI's hieroglyphic name has two main variants (Figure 125) but they remain undeciphered. The portrait head is the more simple of the two, and this is commonly elaborated with a preceding glyph carrying the numerical coefficient "one." Curiously, the second of these forms—presumably the full name—occurs only at Palenque, evidently as a specialized, local aspect of the deity. Elsewhere GI has a more complex name with different surrounding elements, including a curious combination of a hand, **NAAH** (T4), and the "ajaw" face (see Figure 90). This distinct category or type of GI is cited most often in the Early Classic texts of Tikal and environs and remains very poorly understood.

Freidel, Schele, and Parker (1993) link the fuller name of GI as it appears at Palenque to the Classic maize god discussed by Taube (1985), both of whom they called "Hun-Nal-Ye," which they translate as "One Maize Revealed." However, this reading is based on a flawed understanding of the constituent signs. Their "maize" element does resemble the young-maize superfix read **NAL**, but it is different in its internal details and presumably has a different value.[49] Likewise, the reading of the main sign with its central dot as **ye** is very un-

[49] The relationship between this sign (T84) and **NAL** is visually very close, and the two signs are easily confused (Schele, Mathews, and Lounsbury 1990b). However, they are in mutually exclusive settings and to my knowledge were carefully kept separate by Maya scribes (Thompson [1962] indeed gave them separate numbers in his catalog). Another notable context for the particular variant found in GI's name is the God K or K'awil designation found in records of the 819-day count (see for example block C3 on the south face of the platform).

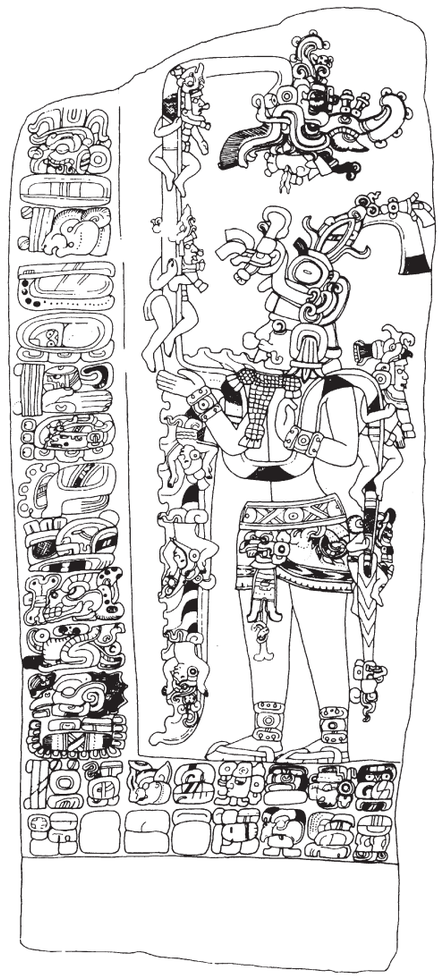


Figure 126. The Hauberg Stela (drawing by Linda Schele from Schele 1985).

likely, since this is a syllabic value only and here the sign is almost surely logographic. Moreover, the common **ye** sign in the Classic script is the downward-pointing hand (a variant of T220 or T710) that never appears in the GI name glyph. For the present, I feel the two signs following the "one" coefficient cannot be read confidently. "Hun Nal Ye" is therefore probably a misnomer.

The opening passage of the south tablet on the platform records the distant accession of GI to "the rulership" (*ti ajawlel*), but what or where did he rule? It is difficult to know for certain. The principal actor here is Itzamnaaj, or more specifically Yax Naah Itzamnaaj, a name that perhaps indicates that this is some sort of "new" or "first" aspect of the deity during the era of Maya creation. Itzamnaaj in some way oversees the accession itself as if he were a "high ruler," or at least of much higher standing than GI. This agrees well with a great many iconographic representations of the Classic Itzamnaaj or God D, who is routinely portrayed on polychrome ceramics as seated atop a sky-band throne. This is the visual indicator of Itzamnaaj's place in the heavens, perhaps even in the capacity of a celestial ruler. The statement in Passage S-1 that the event occurred "in the (center of?) the sky" (*ta wut(?)chan*) would seemingly be a textual reference to the same sky location for Itzamnaaj. Unfortunately, I know of no scene where Itzamnaaj appears together with GI, despite the close connection between these gods recorded on the Palenque platform.

Classic inscriptions from beyond Palenque indicate that Itzamnaaj was a major player in the establishment of the new era a bit later on 13.0.0.0.0. The famous description of the "three stones" on Quirigua Stela C, for example, includes a mention of Itzamnaaj as the deity who completes the binding of the three stones of creation.

For many years GI has been understood as a Venus god, an interpretation that is part of a larger view that identifies the Palenque Triad as astronomical entities (Kelley 1965; Lounsbury 1985; Schlak 1996; Milbrath 1999). Several points

of evidence have been used to support this Venus connection, perhaps the first and most influential being the "Nine Wind" birth date of the god with its suggestive connections to Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl, a Venus deity in central Mexico. Also related to this planetary interpretation for GI is the commonly held view that GI and GIII form a pair of deities who correspond to Hunahpu and Xbalanque of the *Popol Vuh*, who in turn are often seen as mythical representations of Venus and the Sun, respectively (Lounsbury 1985; Schele and Miller 1986:48-51).

As noted earlier, GI is named on the Tablet of the Cross and in the Temple XIX platform text as a key player in Palenque's mythological history long before he was "born" as a member of the Triad. Lounsbury considered the existence of a "pre-Triad GI" as evidence for the existence of two separate gods, one a father and presumed spouse of "Lady Egret" (the Triad Progenitor) and the other the Triad member. Perhaps for this reason Dennis Tedlock (1992:252) is explicit in giving the name Hun Hunahpu to this "pre-Triad" GI, whom Lounsbury considered to be the father of the Triad namesake. The initial "one" sign on GI's name seems to have been influential in choosing this parallel, although it must be said that this particular name glyph is widely applied also to the standard Triad member.

Despite having been first recognized in Palenque's texts, subsequent studies revealed that GI is by no means a local Palenque character. He is depicted and mentioned in numerous inscriptions and iconography throughout the Maya region from the beginnings of the Classic period, and he seems to have been a figure of major cosmological importance. Perhaps the earliest known portrait appears on the so-called "Hauberg Stela," dating stylistically to the Early Classic (Figure 126).[50] His visage is a frequent decoration on Early Classic cache vessels from the central lowlands (Hellmuth 1987) (Figure 127), and a notable full-length portrait



Figure 127. GI portrait on an Early Classic cache vessel (from Hellmuth 1987:Fig. 71).

[50] This monument is said to be a Late Preclassic stela (Schele 1985; Schele, Mathews, and Lounsbury 1990), but I feel on stylistic grounds that it was carved much later and dates no earlier than 8.15.0.0.0. in the Long Count. Lacadena (1995) has presented a similar opinion based on the orthographic conventions apparent in its inscription.

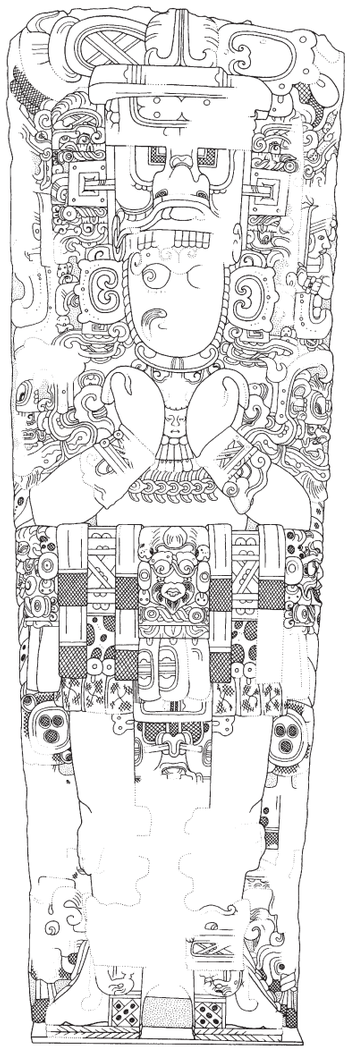


Figure 128. Copan, Stela I, front (drawing by Anne Dowd from Baudez 1994:Fig.2).

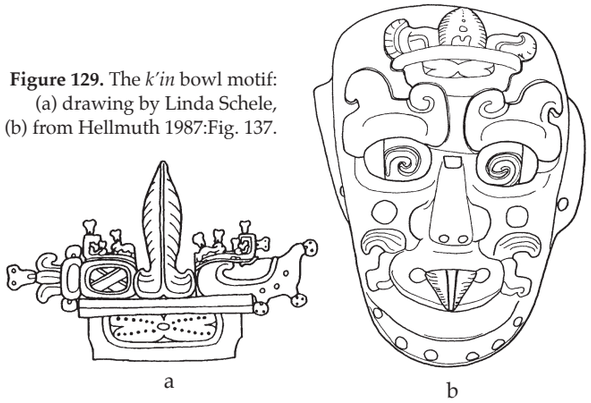


Figure 129. The *k'in* bowl motif: (a) drawing by Linda Schele, (b) from Hellmuth 1987:Fig. 137.

appears on Stela I of Copan (Figure 128).

In these and other representations, GI's main features include a Roman nose (his profile superficially resembles that of the solar god, K'inich Ajaw), a prominent round eye with (usually) an upper curl, a large fish fin or "barbel" on the cheek, and a large "shell" ear or ear ornament (Schele 1976).[51] Frequently more elaborate representations of the god show a helmet or emblematic headdress consisting of the "*k'in* bowl" topped by a three-part grouping of a central stingray spine flanked by a spondylus shell and a crossed-bands floral motif (Figure 129). This is the important iconographic motif named the "Quadripartite Badge" by Robertson (1974), and in many instances it stands alone as a depiction of a type of burner or sacrificial bowl (Taube 1998; D. Stuart 1998), as well as the point of emergence for the "world tree," as depicted in the center of the Tablet of the Cross (not coincidentally, this is the tablet of GI's principal temple).

GI apparently played a significant role in the "era event" on 13.0.0.0.0 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u, as related in one of the many important passages in the Tablet of the Cross (Figure 130). Here we find the standard "era phrase" in connection with the Bak'tun ending, beginning with a

[51] Schele (1976) offered an extensive discussion of the iconography of GI at Palenque and other sites, suggesting that GI had a "zoomorphic" form with reptilian features. This zoomorphic GI was later recognized as the Classic-period representation of God B, or Chaak (Schele and Miller 1986:49, 60; Taube 1992:17-26), although it was still considered a variant form of GI according to Schele and others. Presently I doubt there was any common identity between GI and Chaak, for they appear in very different iconographic contexts. They should best be considered separate deities.

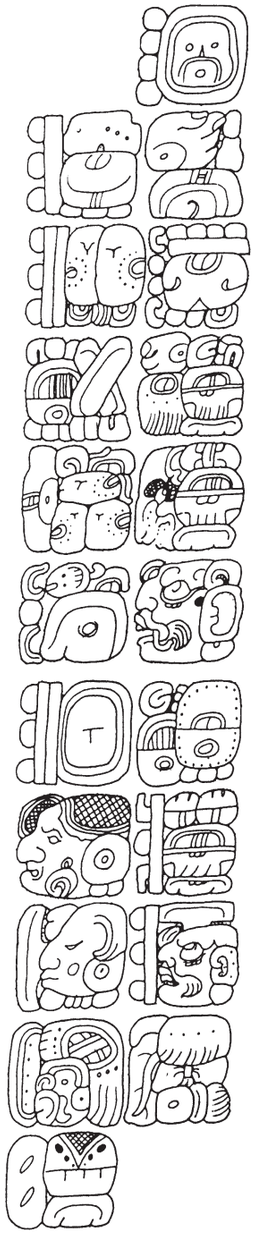


Figure 130. The "era" record from the Tablet of the Cross (D3-C13), recording GI's possible descent from the sky and the subsequent dedication of a temple "in the north" (drawing by Linda Schele).



Figure 131. GI at the 4 Ajaw creation event, from an Early Classic greenstone mask, provenance unknown.

Figure 132. Passages from the middle tablet of the Temple of the Inscriptions, describing the presentation of headgear and jewels to GI (left: C5-D7, right: I4-L2) (drawing by Linda Schele).

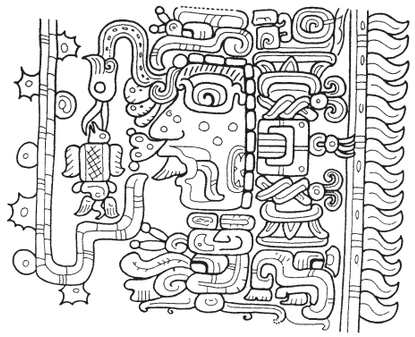


Figure 133. The Solar identity of GI, from an Early Classic cache vessel, provenance unknown. Note the *k'in* element on the deity's cheek. (From Hellmuth 1987:Abb.635.)

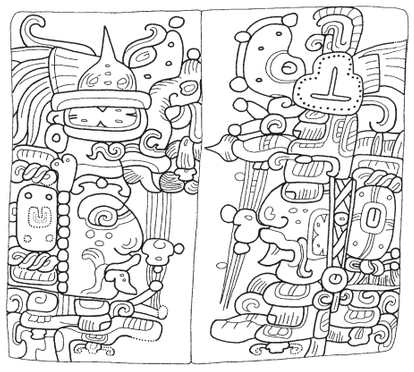


Figure 134. GI and K'inich Ajaw on an Early Classic cache vessel (K773) (from Hellmuth 1987:Abb.636).



Figure 135. Jade earspool with Starry Deer Crocodile, perhaps from Río Azul, Guatemala (drawing by David Stuart after Townsend 1983:No. 56).

verb displaying a sign with an X-like form and perhaps reading **JEL**, "to change-over." The location, as is customary in such records, is *ti' chan Yax ..?.. Nal*, "(at) the sky's edge, the First Hearth Place." An important glyph then follows, possibly reading **EM-TA-CHAN-na**, for "descends from the sky," and then the name of GI. The passage goes on to record the dedication of a GI temple "in the north" on the day 13.0.1.9.2 13 Ik' End of Mol, just over a year after the day of creation itself.

Another association between GI and creation mythology comes from the Vase of the Seven Gods (Kerr no. 2796; Coe 1973:109), which depicts GI among several other deities who are "aligned" (*tz'ahk-aj*) on this origin date. His involvement is also recorded in an important early inscription on the back of a greenstone mask (Figure 131), where his portrait name glyph appears in direct connection with the creation day 4 Ajaw and an event occurring once more at the "sky's edge, the First Hearth Place." The verb glyph in this text is quite unusual, but its single appearance otherwise as Glyph D in the Lunar Series leads me to think that the occasion is GI's "arrival" (*hul*) at this mythic location.

Some important symbolic associations of GI are indicated in the text on the central tablet of the Temple of the Inscriptions (Figure 132). In a lengthy section describing the rituals surrounding the K'atun endings in the reign of K'inich Janab Pakal, we read of the presentation of jewels and clothing to effigies of GI and the other Triad gods (Macri 1988:117-120, 1997:91-92). The gifts to the gods are sometimes simply written **U-PIK**, which I take to be *u-pik*, "its skirt, dressings."[52] For the Period Ending 9.11.0.0.0, the inscription (C5-D7) states that the king "gives the '*k'in* bowl;' it is his

[52] The main logogram has been read as *pi(h)*, "bundle," by Schele and Grube (1992), but I prefer **PIK** in all of the contexts they mention. The variants used in this Palenque inscription are identical to signs for the Bak'tun period, which are in turn replaced by the signs **pi-ki** in spellings at Caracol and Copan. I therefore take the Bak'tun sign to be logographic **PIK** or syllabic **pi**. *Pik* is the widespread Mayan term for counting units of 8,000, and on bundles it serves just this role. A glyphic label **3-PIK**, for example, records the total of 24,000 cacao beans held within the bundle.

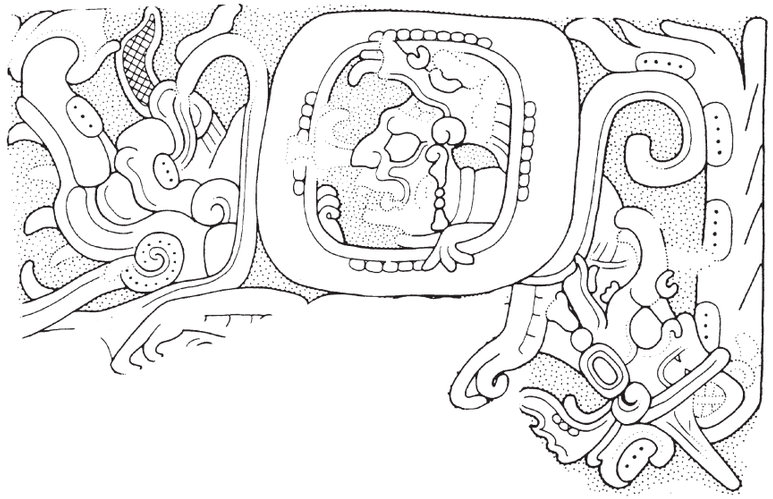


Figure 136. The sun within the womb or stomach of the Starry Deer Crocodile, on Yaxchilan HS3, Step III (drawing by Ian Graham from Graham 1982:169).

helmet; many are the dressings of GI." For the following K'atun (I4-J9), Pakal "gives the ? ?; many are the wrappings of his white paper necklace; the Green Fire ? are his earspools; the Green '*k'in* bowl' is the helmet of GI." All of the Triad gods' adornments here have similar specific names or designations, providing what amounts to descriptions of the proper iconographic program for each. Here the accoutrements of GI appear the same as those found especially in his Early Classic portraits.

GI's *k'in* bowl helmet indicates his important solar connections, but we can cite certain other associations he has with K'inich Ajaw. Significantly, the facial profile of GI bears a strong resemblence to the standard sun god, as many writers have noticed. Details of the eye and other facial features mark GI as a separate entity in some fundamental way, yet he must have had some conceptual link to the sun, for he is portrayed on an Early Classic cache vessel with a small *k'in* sign on his cheek (Figure 133), as Hellmuth (1987:284) points out. Another cache vessel shows a pairing of GI and K'inich Ajaw in a composition clearly designed to suggest some intimate connection between them (Figure 134).

The *k'in* bowl motif is of course found also as the back end of the Starry Deer Crocodile and other representations of the "Cosmic Serpent" (see Figure 45). From its inverted form spills divine liquid, incorporating symbols of blood and water that sustain the cosmos. In these representations the *k'in* bowl often has a skull beneath it, precisely as we see shown *en face* on the Tablet of the Cross and the Sarcophagus lid at Palenque. This does not form a second rear head for the creature, but rather "attaches" to the backside of the crocodile as some sort of emblematic device. In one revealing example (Figure 135), the *k'in* bowl represents the anus or vagina of the Starry Deer Crocodile, and thus seems to serve as a symbol for the rear orifice of the creature.

How GI is connected to this iconographic pattern is unclear, yet some hieroglyphic evidence may help unravel part of the mystery. The *k'in* bowl is a common hieroglyphic sign for

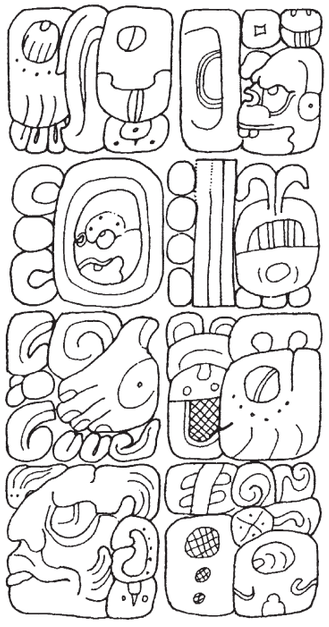


Figure 137. Passage from the west tablet of the Temple of the Inscriptions, O9-P12 (drawing by Linda Schele).

EL, used in the spelling of the "east" glyph, **EL-K'IN**. The word *el* means "rise, come out." One can naturally wonder, therefore, if perhaps the *k'in* bowl itself was somehow considered a "vessel" for the rising sun in the east. As Tate (1992:66) notes, representations of the crocodile regularly orient the rear end with the *k'in* bowl toward the east. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Starry Deer Crocodile likely served as a symbol for the night or underworld sky, and I believe an argument can be made that the *k'in* bowl was its "anus," whence the sun would daily rise in the east. Representations of the solar cartouche within the crocodile's body (Figure 136) strongly suggest that the sun was "consumed" by the crocodile during its nightly course beneath the earth and defecated or reborn each morning.

GI is also clearly a deity of the water. Visually his face seems to be strongly related to fish, and perhaps the so-called "*xok*" fish in particular. The fin-like protrusions from his cheeks and the round eye with its upper curl seem to have visual parallels with the "*xok*" entity, which itself remains highly enigmatic as a sort of stylized shark or mythical fish.[53] Kelly's original recognition of GI's birth on the day "Nine Wind" and the connection this suggests to Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl (Kelley 1965) may offer additional support for GI's associations with an aquatic environment. Among the Mexica Aztec, Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl was a wind deity with strong visual associations with ducks and perhaps other waterfowl (O'Mack 1991). GI was also a water bird—a cormorant, perhaps—in at least one of his important visual aspects, and this stands as the deity's defining characteristic in the impersonation headdress worn by the king on the south face of the platform. Such parallels, while intriguing, hold little explanatory power by themselves. As we have seen, it is difficult to draw close parallels between specific deities or supernatural characters in the Maya and Central Mexican religions, yet it seems entirely possible that GI and Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl could both be reflections of an old idea or character from Preclassic mythology, and thereby share a common cultural origin.

The water associations of GI are cited also in a fascinating passage from the west tablet of the Temple of the Inscriptions (Figure 137) that records an early event

[53] For more in-depth, so to speak, discussions of the *xok* fish, see the studies by Jones (1985, 1991) and especially the important paper on resurrection iconography by Quenon and Le Fort (1997).

largely ignored before now in the study of Palenque's mythology. The date of the passage is 13.4.12.3.6 1 Kimi 19 Pax, falling some nine decades after the "era" event on 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u. The inscription first cites a date in historical time, 9.12.3.3.6 7 Kimi 19 Keh, associated with some sort of "arrival" (*hul*), and quickly shifts the narrative back in time with a Distance Number of 9.7.11.3.0, or approximately 3,700 years. (The juxtaposition of "1 Kimi" and "7 Kimi" suggests the related calendar names of the two important Underworld gods of the *Popol Vuh*, "One Death" and "Seven Death.") The early event concerns the death god, and the verb is **?-ji-ya yo-OHL-la**, *..?..-(a)j-iiy y-ohl*, "'x'-ed is his heart." The same text earlier cites several events readable as *tim-ohl*, "to satisfy," and it is possible that this event concerning the death god employs a logographic form of **TIM**, "to swell, inflate" (cf. Yucatec *tem-ol*). At any rate, the most interesting and readable passage states **ya-YAL-ji-ya tu-U-k'a-ba "GI" TA-?-K'AHK'-NAHB**, *yahl-(a)j-iiy t-u-k'ab "GI" ta-?-k'ahk'nahb*, "he/it was thrown from the hand of GI into the center(?) of the sea." The nature of the event is difficult to understand beyond this evocative description, but it again points to the intimate connection of GI with primordial waters and the ocean.

Even the mythological place of Matwil, the stated locale of the GI's supernatural birth, seems to have close associations with water and the sea in particular. The etymology of the name is probably derived ultimately from the noun *mat*, meaning "cormorant," merganser, or some other type of water bird. In the iconography of the Temple of the Foliated Cross, the Matwil place glyph can be seen to adorn at least three images of large conch shells (Figure 138), arguably serving as explicit toponymic labels for the shells, which seem to serve as places of divine origin and emergence. The seashell would be a fitting place for the birth of GI and his divine siblings.

There also seem to be important connections between GI and women in the art of the Classic period, although the nature of these associations is difficult to understand. Women's portraits often show a prominent "Quadripartite Badge" in the headgear, much as GI wears in several of his representations. Many writers have also remarked on the prominence of

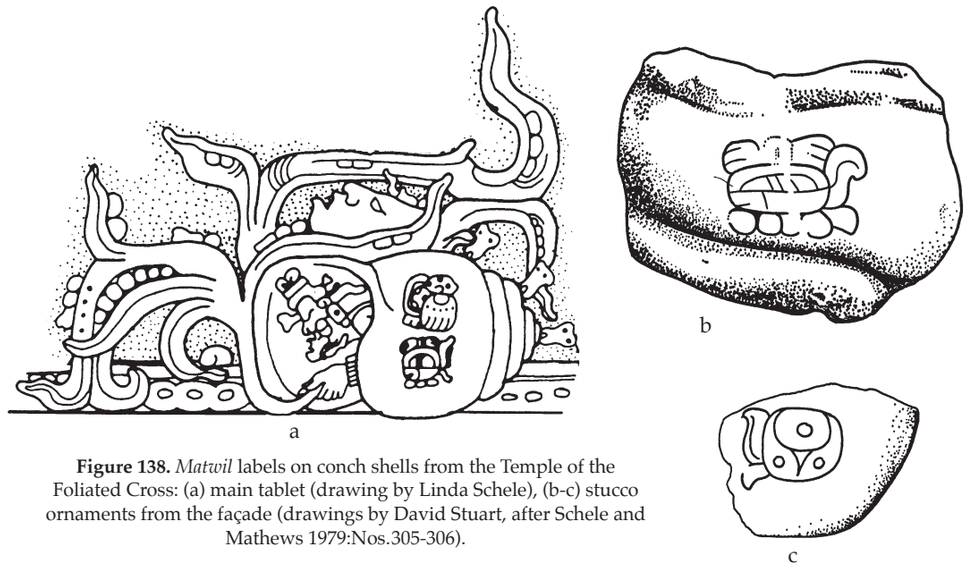


Figure 138. *Matwil* labels on conch shells from the Temple of the Foliated Cross: (a) main tablet (drawing by Linda Schele), (b-c) stucco ornaments from the façade (drawings by David Stuart, after Schele and Mathews 1979:Nos.305-306).

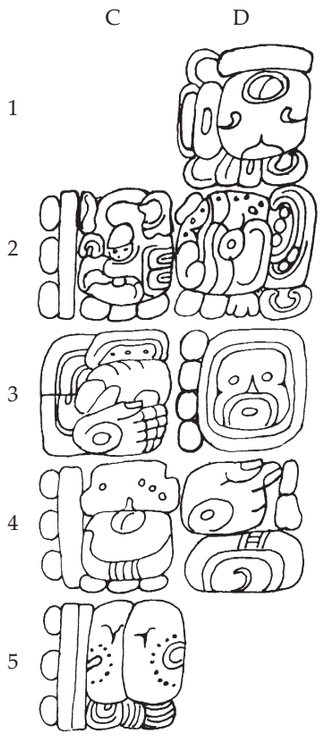


Figure 139. Tablet of the Cross, D1-C5 (drawing by Linda Schele).

xok creatures in the decorations of female ritual costumes (e.g., J. Miller 1974). These, in turn, have strong associations with *xok* symbolism found on some representations of the tonsured maize god (Taube 1985), but again it is hard to know in what way GI relates to those entities. Perhaps the appearance of the *k'in* bowl in women's costume derives from its importance in the iconography of the "Starry Deer Crocodile" and its relatives, described above, where the *k'in* bowl may symbolize in some way the point of solar rebirth and emergence.

Given GI's connections to the sun and his apparent associations with the eastern point of solar rebirth (the *k'in* bowl), we might speculate that he was considered a watery aspect of the sun before its emergence from the underworld. As a protagonist in creation mythology, it is possible that GI was a kind of "proto-sun" that existed before the ordering of the world and the appearance of K'inich Ajaw in a more current cosmological order. I offer this interpretation only very tentatively, however.

Are There One or Two GIs?

The chronology of the Cross Tablet has long presented problems for epigraphers. The interpretations have been discussed in several venues for over a century, but new evidence from the Temple XIX texts offers some indirect evidence that might move us toward a final resolution of the long posed and much debated questions.

The discussions by Lounsbury (1980) and others have centered on one particularly troubling passage near the beginning of the tablet (Figure 139). A Distance Number at D1 and C2 records the interval 8.5.0 and precedes a "birth" event at D2 marked in the past tense (*sih-aj-iiy*). The tense marker on the birth verb would suggest it is the earlier of two linked events, or the beginning point of the temporal reckoning. A second verb or event comes at C3, apparently a version of an event found in other Palenque inscriptions showing a deer hoof sign—probably read **MAY**—above a human hand. This in turn precedes a notation of the date 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u, or 13.0.0.0.0, which Lounsbury and others have taken to be the end-point of the calculation.

The question surrounding this passage centers on the Distance Number. The Cross Tablet opens in the immediately preceding glyphs with a record of the birth of the mythical figure I call the "Triad Progenitor," and it seems natural to see the birth at D2 to be a repetition of this event

("it was so much time from the birth"). However, if we add the Distance Number to the established birth date, we do not reach 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u. Instead, the calculation gives:

```
 12. 19. 13.  4.  0    8 Ajaw 18 Tzek
            8.  5.  0
(13.  0.  1.  9.  0    11 Ajaw 18 Mol)
```

The resulting date is not recorded in the Cross text. Lounsbury, however, followed earlier analysts (e.g., Goodman 1897) in stressing that 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u was the end point of the calculation, resulting in an unexpressed earlier date:

```
(12. 19. 11.13.  0    1 Ajaw 8 Muwan)
            8.  5.  0
 13.  0.  0.  0.  0    4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u
```

This scheme necessitates the existence of two birth episodes, begging the question asked by Lounsbury (1980:103), "Whose birth?" Because the next cited protagonist on the Cross inscription is GI (at C8 and D8), Lounsbury surmised that the implied birth event pertained to an earlier GI, or "GI'," who shared the name of the more familiar Triad member. He suggested that the first GI, seemingly born on 12.19.11.13.0, was the spouse of "Lady Beastie," whom I here call the Triad Progenitor. It seemed natural to propose that this couple were the mythic parents of the Palenque Triad. As Schele and Freidel (1990:244-245) summarize this widely accepted interpretation,

> The First Mother was Lady Beastie [who was] the mother of the gods and the Creatrix in the Maya version of the cosmos. …[T]he Palencanos saw her operate in their lives through her spirit counterpart, the moon. Her husband and the father of her children is called GI' (G-one-prime) by modern scholars. He established the order of time and space just after the fourth version of the cosmos was created on 4 Ahau 8 Cumku. Both the Creatrix and her husband were born during the previous manifestation of creation, but their children were born 754 years into this one.

Despite standing today as the standard version of Palenque mythology, this story is beset with questionable readings. We must look more carefully at the Tablet of the Cross inscription and its troubling passage to begin to see where the problematic issues lie.

Lounsbury's suggestion that we have two separate birth events—and therefore two deities named GI—seems an excessively complex reading of the passage. The date 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u, at D3 and C4, need not be linked with the "deer hoof" event, as Lounsbury and others long assumed must be the case. It is equally plausible that the date for the deer hoof episode was left unexpressed, and that the Distance Number is in fact reckoned from the opening birth event of the inscription. This, after all, seems the natural way to approach the birth glyph at D2 if one were unaware of the supposed ambiguities soon to come. The first calculation given above, leading to an unexpressed date 13.0.1.9.0 11 Ajaw 18 Mol, may well be the correct date for the deer hoof event. The "era" date has its own verbal statement at D4 and C5, "13 Bak'tuns are finished."

Support for this revision comes from other citations of the deer hoof (*k'al mayij*) event in Palenque's inscriptions (see Figures 30 and 119). In the text of the Palace Tablet, we find it cited as an early ritual event associated with the seven-year-old K'inich K'an Joy Chitam.

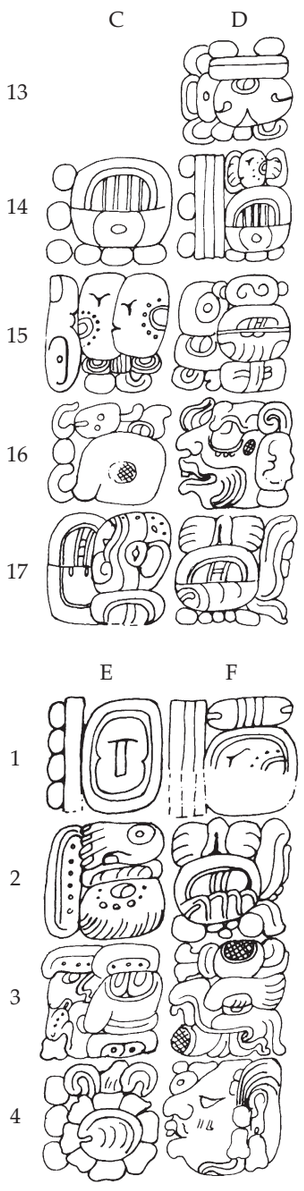


Figure 140. The record of GI's birth on the Tablet of the Cross, D13-F4 (drawing by Linda Schele).

On the jambs of Temple XVIII, as we have seen, it is also a youth event involving the young K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, who was about six years old at the time. In each instance these events are reckoned from a birth event, precisely as we find in the Tablet of the Cross. The natural conclusion is that the Tablet of the Cross records a similar deer hoof event for the eight-year-old Triad Progenitor. Logically, then, GI, or a predecessor with the same name, need not be a participant in this event.

No matter how we interpret this passage from the Tablet of the Cross, we are still faced with the conundrum that GI existed centuries before his stated birth. So much is clear from reading the south face of the Temple XIX platform, which states that the god's accession to rulership occurred roughly two centuries before his supposed birth. Let us review the major events involving him, as they are recorded at Palenque:

- GI assumed rulership "in the heavens" on 12.10.1.13.2 9 Ik' 5 Mol under the auspices of Yax Naah Itzamnaaj. Any previous birth event of this GI remains unknown.
- GI seems to be a major participant in a sacrificial beheading or "axing" of the cosmological entity called the "Starry Deer Crocodile," or two aspects of this creature, on 12.10.12.14.18 1 Etz'nab 6 Yaxk'in.
- The Triad Progenitor ("Lady Beastie") was born significantly later, on 12.19.13.4.0 8 Ajaw 18 Tzek, and then participated in a "deer hoof" ceremony when eight years old.
- GI is cited as a participant in a house dedication event in the "north" on 13.0.1.9.2 13 Ik' End of Mol.
- GI is the protagonist of an event described on the west tablet of the Temple of the Inscriptions, where the death god "was thrown into the center of the sea from the hand of GI." This occurred on 13.4.12.3.6 1 Kimi 19 Pax.
- GI, now as a member of the Palenque Triad, is "born" on 1.18.5.3.2 9 Ik' 15 Keh, apparently as a "creation" of the Triad Progenitor.

That GI's birth closes this chain of events would seem to support Lounsbury's contention that there existed two GIs. But there is no reason why we must consider the "ruling" GI cited in the opening passage of the platform and the first-born

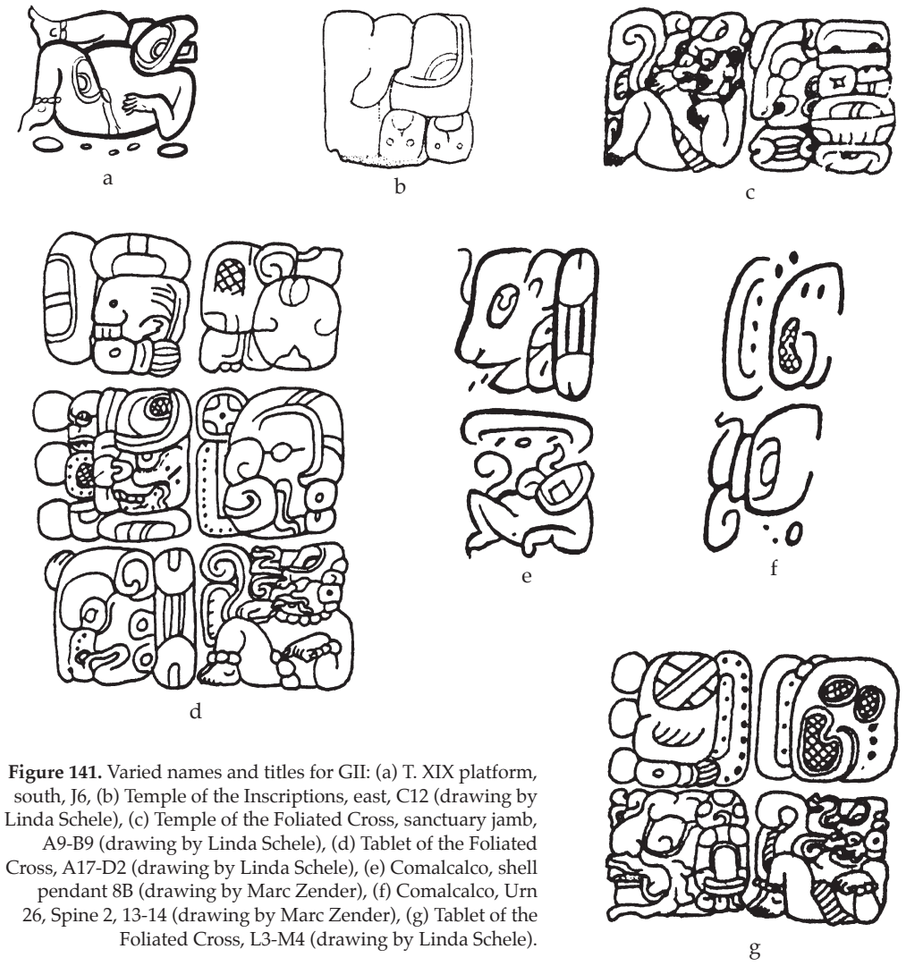


Figure 141. Varied names and titles for GII: (a) T. XIX platform, south, J6, (b) Temple of the Inscriptions, east, C12 (drawing by Linda Schele), (c) Temple of the Foliated Cross, sanctuary jamb, A9-B9 (drawing by Linda Schele), (d) Tablet of the Foliated Cross, A17-D2 (drawing by Linda Schele), (e) Comalcalco, shell pendant 8B (drawing by Marc Zender), (f) Comalcalco, Urn 26, Spine 2, 13-14 (drawing by Marc Zender), (g) Tablet of the Foliated Cross, L3-M4 (drawing by Linda Schele).

of the Triad to be separate entities. The identical forms of the name and shared importance of the day 9 Ik' suggest that they are the same character, or in some way "aspects" of a single deity. The essential sameness of the two is perhaps best seen in a passage from the Tablet of the Cross, where GI's birth is recorded at C17 through F4 (Figure 140). There, we read (starting at the bottom of columns C and D) "he arrives at Matwil (on) 9 Ik' 15 Keh. He touches(?) the earth at Matwil…" But throughout this passage we do not find GI's name. As is customary in Classic Mayan syntax—especially in this inscription—the subject's name has been omitted because is it understood from a citation of the previous episode, where GI is named at C16-D16. The subject of that earlier event is the "pre-born" GI, yet this god is equated syntactically with the deity who is born eight centuries later.

I suggest, therefore, that the creation of the Triad gods entailed a "rebirth" of a previously existing GI into a new, more localized order of existence. The GI who took office under Itzamnaaj "in the sky" seems a deity of wide cosmological significance, whereas the GI of the Palenque Triad seems a far more limited aspect of the god, intimately tied to the Palenque

dynasty. "Lady Beastie" or the Triad Progenitor, it will be remembered, is the first character of the narrative to carry a local Palenque Emblem Glyph. Yet it is interesting that the underlying message of the Temple XIX platform is that the new Palenque ruler is a re-embodiment of GI in his earliest phase, before the Triad existed.

Notes on GII and GIII

GII is clearly a youthful aspect of K'awil, or God K. The iconic name glyph (Figure 141) is nearly always given in the distinctive full-figure pose reserved for infants in Maya art, and the sense it conveys is simply "the baby K'awil." This indeed is the direct translation of his name, as revealed by an important spelling from nearby Comalcalco (Figure 141f), where we find mention of a god called **u-²ne K'AWIL**, *Unen K'awil*, "Baby K'awil" (Marc Zender, personal communication 2000; Martin 2002). On some occasions his name is accompanied by the **ch'o-ko** glyph, for *ch'ok*, "child, youth" (Figure 141c-e). His extended name phrase from the Tablet of the Foliated Cross (Figure 141d) provides a few interesting descriptive statements about GII, including the enigmatic phrase **?-YAX-MUT-ti k'a-wi-NAL?**, "the ..?.. new bird K'awil place(?)," possibly a toponym associated with his birth. A more personal description comes next with **3-a-ha-li K'UH**, for *Ux Ahil K'uh*, "the third created god," properly marking his place in the sequence of Triad births.

Portraits of GII adorn the four middle piers of the Temple of the Inscriptions, where he is depicted as an infant deity cradled in the arms of standing figures. These are probably four early rulers of Palenque—ancestors of K'inich Janab Pakal—as strongly suggested by the clear Kan Bahlam headdress worn by one of them (Robertson 1979, 1983:46).

In a passage from the sanctuary jamb of the Temple of the Foliated Cross (Figure 141c) his title is **ch'o-ko NAAH-5-CHAN-na-AJAW**, or *ch'ok Naahho'chan ajaw*, the "young lord of Naahho'chan." Naahho'chan is an important supernatural location, often associated with the "Paddler" gods, among other deities. It is also cited as an important location in the 13.0.0.0.0 creation event, as recorded on Stela C at Quirigua (Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993:67). I believe it is probably the specific name of an important supernatural mountain from Classic Maya mythology, since we find on one important vessel (K688) a mention of *Naahho'chan Witz xaman*, "Naahho'chan Mountain, in the north," seemingly a place of rebirth. This generative aspect of the location is in all likelihood related to GII being the infant aspect of K'awil.

Also in this god's temple, the Temple of the Foliated Cross, we find a very important yet puzzling reference to GII as an infant aspect of the Jaguar God of the Underworld (Figure 141g). Blocks L3-M4 of the tablet's main inscription hold a slightly elaborated name phrase for GII, introduced by the Triad title. Following this we again find **u-²ne** (*unen*) and, curiously, the portrait head of the Jaguar God, or "the infant 'Jaguar God'."[54] GII's portrait name then closes the passage. I take the combination to indicate that GII was in some way an aspect also of the Jaguar God of the Underworld, who may have been the Classic Maya deity of fire (D. Stuart 1998). There is also considerable evidence to suggest that this jaguar god was

[54] Stela 9 from Lamanai (Reents-Budet 1988) (Figure 48) clearly alludes to the same "infant Jaguar God." A small portrait of the jaguar deity emerges from the serpent bar held by the ruler; above the god's head is a "name medallion" bearing the glyph **u-ne**, for *unen*. Both of these are no doubt related also to the sacrificed jaguar baby depicted on codex style vessels and discussed earlier in relation to the crocodile's "hole" mentioned in Passage S-2. Martin (2002) has a recent important discussion of the jaguar baby character in the script and iconography.

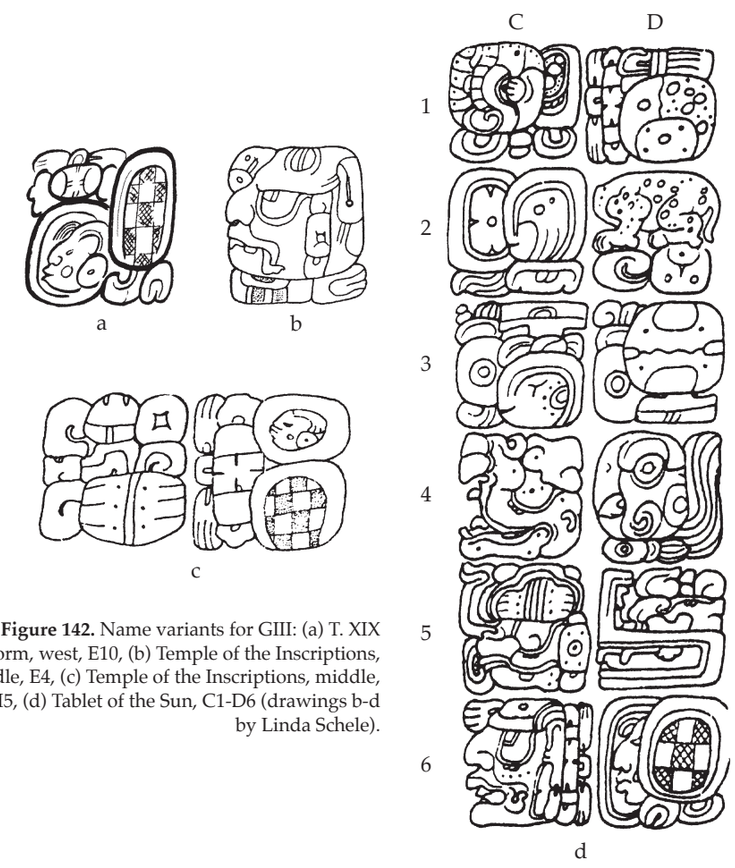


Figure 142. Name variants for GIII: (a) T. XIX platform, west, E10, (b) Temple of the Inscriptions, middle, E4, (c) Temple of the Inscriptions, middle, N4-M5, (d) Tablet of the Sun, C1-D6 (drawings b-d by Linda Schele).

an important manifestation of the moon (Milbrath 1999:120-138). It is tempting to relate the "infant Jaguar God" cited at Palenque to certain jaguar baby images in Early Classic texts and iconography at Tikal (Martin 2002), although I am at a loss to explain what their precise connections might be.

The name of GIII, the slightly older sibling of GII, takes a more consistent form. It always displays the title **K'INICH**, indicating that, like many Palenque rulers, he was considered some aspect of the sun (Schele and Miller 1986:50) (Figure 142). This basic identity of the god is revealed by a single reference from the Temple of the Inscriptions, where his customary name is replaced simply by the generic-sounding moniker K'inich Ajaw, "the Sun Lord" (Figure 142b). Otherwise his standard name has three components after the honorific solar prefix: a profile face in a cartouche, a "checkerboard" sign, and -**wa**. Lounsbury (1985) considered that these signs served to spell the widespread name of the Underworld, *Xibalba*, but this seems unlikely, since the readings of the head and the checkerboard—both very rare signs—are far from secure. In fact the name glyph of GIII remains undeciphered.

The iconographic identity of GIII has been extended to include various jaguar deities, including the Jaguar God of the Underworld (Schele and Miller 1986:50-51), but in point of fact we have no deity portrait connecting directly to the hieroglyphic name. The supposed connections of GIII to jaguars derived from several indirect lines of evidence, including the

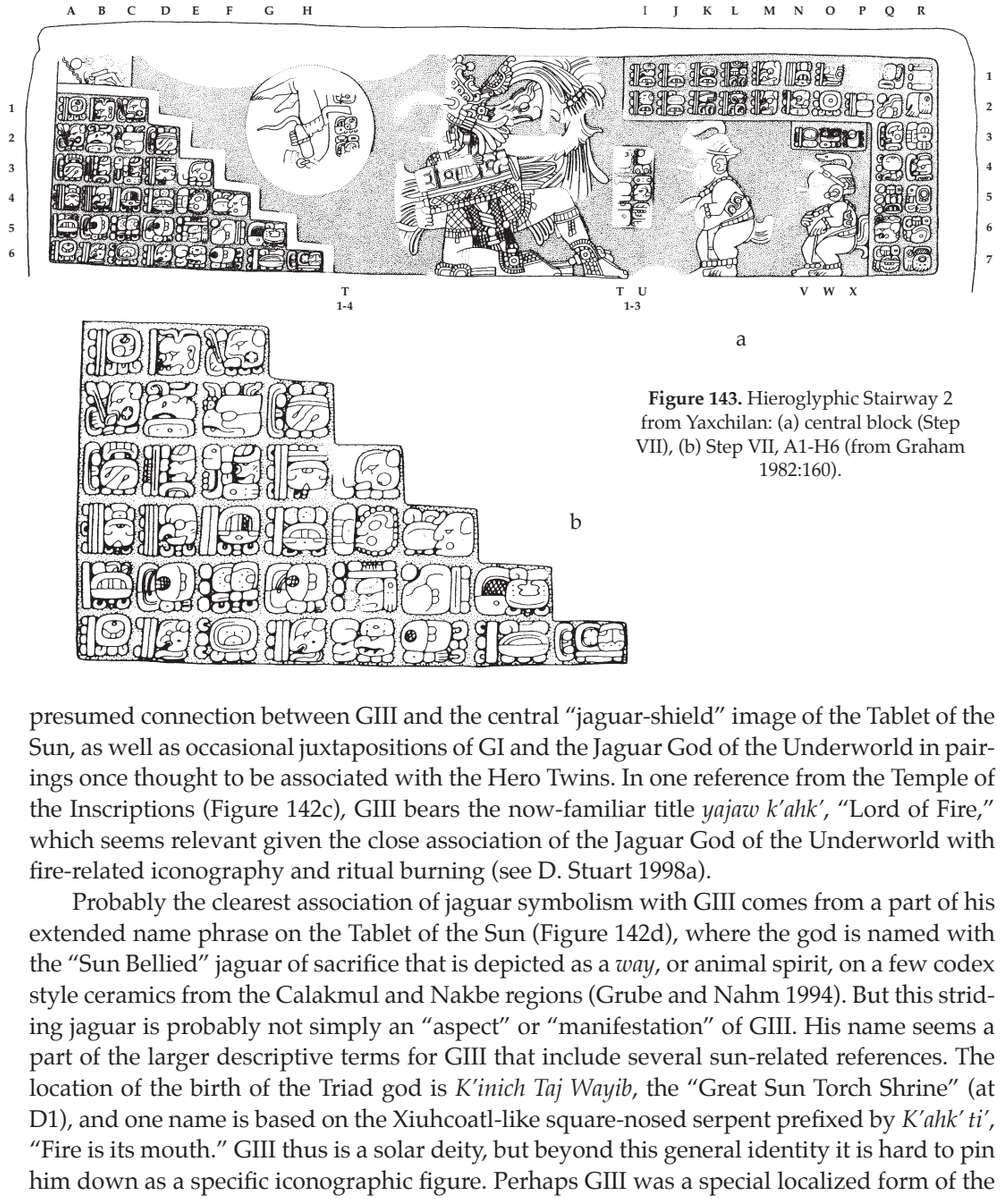


Figure 143. Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 from Yaxchilan: (a) central block (Step VII), (b) Step VII, A1-H6 (from Graham 1982:160).

presumed connection between GIII and the central "jaguar-shield" image of the Tablet of the Sun, as well as occasional juxtapositions of GI and the Jaguar God of the Underworld in pairings once thought to be associated with the Hero Twins. In one reference from the Temple of the Inscriptions (Figure 142c), GIII bears the now-familiar title *yajaw k'ahk'*, "Lord of Fire," which seems relevant given the close association of the Jaguar God of the Underworld with fire-related iconography and ritual burning (see D. Stuart 1998a).

Probably the clearest association of jaguar symbolism with GIII comes from a part of his extended name phrase on the Tablet of the Sun (Figure 142d), where the god is named with the "Sun Bellied" jaguar of sacrifice that is depicted as a *way*, or animal spirit, on a few codex style ceramics from the Calakmul and Nakbe regions (Grube and Nahm 1994). But this striding jaguar is probably not simply an "aspect" or "manifestation" of GIII. His name seems a part of the larger descriptive terms for GIII that include several sun-related references. The location of the birth of the Triad god is *K'inich Taj Wayib*, the "Great Sun Torch Shrine" (at D1), and one name is based on the Xiuhcoatl-like square-nosed serpent prefixed by *K'ahk' ti'*, "Fire is its mouth." GIII thus is a solar deity, but beyond this general identity it is hard to pin him down as a specific iconographic figure. Perhaps GIII was a special localized form of the sun god, K'inich Ajaw, with a name that somehow reflected Palenque's own understanding of the deity.

The "Axe" Event

One key to understanding the larger narrative story concerning creation and the births of the Triad is the second episode of the platform's main inscription (see Figure 39), where we read of the decapitation of two crocodiles (or perhaps two aspects of one crocodile). GI is named

at the end of the passage and seems to be a principal agent in the event, if not the one who conducted the actual sacrifice. This event occurs, not coincidentally, on the day 1 Etz'nab, or what the Mesoamericans of highland Mexico would have called "One Flint-Knife." I suggest that the sacrificial event reflects a Classic Maya understanding of a familiar episode known from later sources of Mesoamerican creation mythology, involving the sacrifice of a large reptile, sometimes called Cipactli in the Central Mexican sources. If true, this one passage from the platform inscription stands as a remarkable indicator of the persistence and antiquity of pan-Mesoamerican myths and religious narratives.

The main verb of the passage in question is based on the root *ch'ak-baah*, "head chop," and in other settings this has been interpreted as little more than a reference to warfare and conquest. At times this word can indeed refer to the ritual decapitation of war captives (Orejel 1990), as in the case of the sacrifice of the Copan ruler Waxaklajun Ubaah K'awil (also known as 18 Rabbit) by the king of neighboring Quirigua. But even there *ch'ak-baah* is an event with decidedly mythological connotations, best understood as a matter of underworld reenactment.[55] In texts from Yaxchilan and elsewhere, *ch'ak-baah* plays a key role in the narrative of creation mythology, much like we find in Temple XIX. The important text accompanying the ballgame scene on the central block of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 at Yaxchilan (Figure 143) recounts three such events, all using *chak-baah* verb glyphs identical to that from Passage S-2, that fall well within mythological time. The three sacrifices recorded in this text are separated by extremely long time periods, yet the precise placement of each date in the "pre-era" Long Count is difficult to know.[56] The three sacrifices are presented as a clear sequence, each accompanied by an ordinal number ("first, second, third") before a sequence spelling **a-ha-li**, for *ah-al* or *ah-il*. This term has been interpreted as meaning "conquest," based on an attested Ch'olti' term, but Schele and Freidel (1991) offer "creation" as an alternative. The latter interpretation could hold more merit, based as it is on a widespread root *aj* for "awaken." As Schele and Freidel (1991:302) note, this *ah-al* or *ah-il* glyph has strong associations with ritual ballcourts, which were themselves locales for the sacrifice and possible decapitation of prisoners (see Miller and Houston 1987). The Yaxchilan step is an important example of this association between war, sacrifice, and the ballgame, yet the mythological context underlying these themes could not be more explicit. Captive sacrifices in such "courts of creation" were clear reenactments of cosmological "awakenings."

As we have just seen, the birth of GII of the Palenque Triad is described as *ux ahil*, the "third awakening," and appropriately he is the third-born of the Triad. Birth, creation, and "awakenings" all therefore seem to be interrelated concepts in these narratives. The first, second, and third "awakenings" (*ahil*) at Yaxchilan, each brought on by the sacrifice of a different individual, thus probably refer in some way to distinct phases of world creation, or separate creations in their own right. Certainly the idea of previous creations ending through cycles of destruction is a widespread one in Mesoamerica (see Gossen 1986).

Such patterns of usage involving *ch'ak-baah* events help us to frame the larger significance of the crocodile sacrifice (or sacrifices) recorded in Temple XIX. This too was an act involving world creation, and GI was the principal actor involved. It seems to be a Classic

[55] The Copan king's sacrifice is recorded in one Quirigua text as having taken place in an underworld place, the so-called "Black Hole," suggesting a macabre role-playing by the old ruler at the time of his death (D. Stuart 1992:176).

[56] The three Calendar Round dates on the step, with their intervals, are: 13 Manik' 5 Pax + 5.19.0.17 = 9 Kan 12 Xul + 3.8.10.14.*16 = 1 Ajaw 13 Xul.

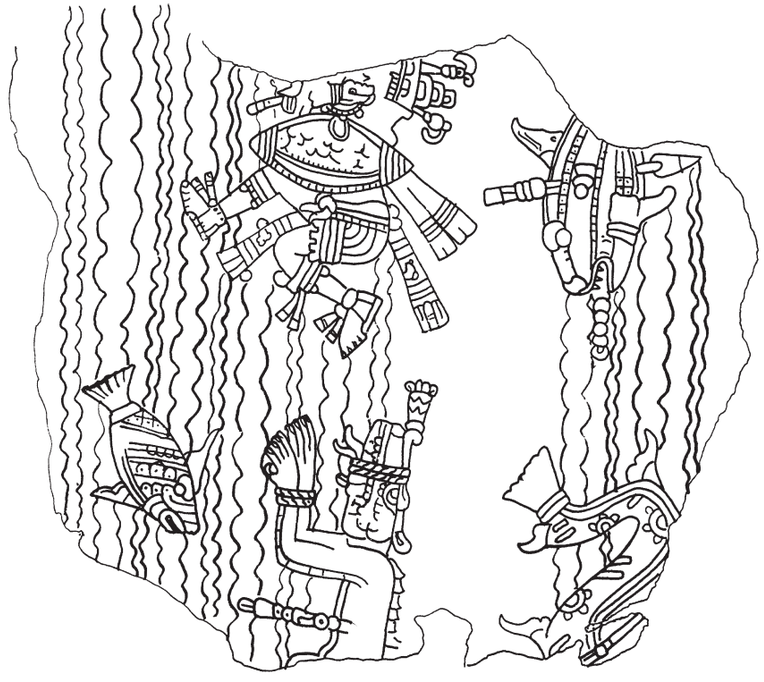


Figure 144. Painting from Mayapan depicting the sacrifice of Itzam Cab Ain (drawing by Karl Taube).

Maya variation on a widespread and surely old story, where a primordial watery creature is killed in order to create the surface of the world.[57] One such narrative is related in the Books of Chilam Balam from Yucatan, where we read of the great reptilian Itzam Cab Ain:

> [Ah Mesencab] turned the sky and the Peten upside down, and Bolon ti Ku raised up Itzam Cab Ain; there was a great cataclysm, and the ages ended with a flood. The 18 Bak Katun was being counted and in its seventeenth part. Bolon ti Ku refused to permit Itzam Cab Ain to take the Peten and to destroy the things of the world, so he cut the throat of Itzam Cab Ain and with his body formed the surface of the Peten. (Craine and Reindorp 1979:117-118)[58]

Itzam Cab Ain is, as Taube (1989) has shown, the Yucatec name for the crocodile so widely depicted in Classic art, including its Starry Deer-Crocodile aspect mentioned at Palenque. This story is of course a variation on a similar narrative well known from Central Mexican mythology, wherein Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca kill the Earth Monster (a

[57] I would like to acknowledge the fine work of Erik Velásquez García (2002, personal communication 2003) in bringing many of these mythological sources together and independently relating them to the sacrifice event in the Temple XIX narrative.

[58] The passage from the *Tizimin* which describes the sacrifice (Edmonson 1982:41) reads *ca ix xot i u cal Ytzam Kab Ain ca u ch'aah u petenil u pach*, which Edmonson translates as "and then will be cut the throat of Itzam Kab Ain, who bears the country on his back." In Yucatec, *xot* is "cut, slice," and *cal* (*kal*) is "throat, neck" (Bricker, Po'ot Yah, and Dzul de Po'ot 1998). The *Tizimin* passage could therefore just as easily describe a complete beheading as a throat cutting.

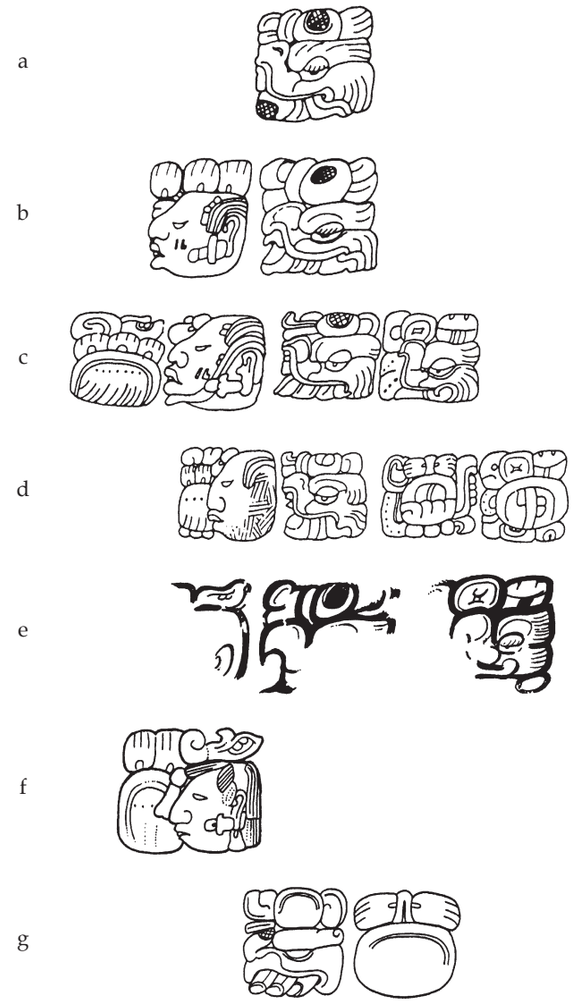


Figure 145. Name variants of the Triad Progenitor: (a) Tablet of the Cross, F8, (b) Tablet of the Cross, B17-C1, (c) Tablet of the Sun, C12-D13, (d) Tablet of the Foliated Cross, C10-D11, (e) Palace, House E paintings, (f) Palace, House D, Pier E, (g) Palace, House A façade (drawings a-d by Linda Schele).

zoomorphic aspect of Tlaltecuhtli) and create the earth from his dismembered body parts (Taube 1993:69-70). Karl Taube (personal communication 2003) has recently pointed out to me a clear representation of this event in a Late Postclassic mural excavated at Mayapan in Structure Q. 95 (Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lupe 2001) (Figure 144). The crocodile has been speared rather than decapitated, and the human figure above the reptile displays the distinctive shell pectoral of Quetzalcoatl. If we assume GI is indeed the actor behind the crocodile sacrifice recorded in Temple XIX, we can point to another strong parallel between these two deities so removed from one another in time and space.

Several glyphs from the Temple XIX passage add important information to this story, but as we have seen in Chapter 3 they are difficult to decipher in many respects. The possible

mention of *u ch'ich'el*, "its blood" (presumably that of the crocodile) gives emphasis to the sacrificial nature of the event, as does the use of a verb possibly signifying something like "thrice flowed" (at F4). Possibly in this ancient version of the story it was the blood spilled from the sacrifice, rather than the body, that was the special creative substance from the reptile. The emphasis on "three" with this blood event also reminds us of the triadic structure of the decapitation events recorded at Yaxchilan. I would think it very likely that here it serves to anticipate if not directly cause the birth and "creation" (*ch'ab*) of the Triad by the Triad Progenitor, as in the next passage of the text.

The Name and Identity of the Triad Progenitor

A key figure in the mythical narrative is, of course, the Triad Progenitor, born before the current era and apparently the creator of the Palenque Triad. The various forms of the name of the Triad Progenitor were first treated together by Lounsbury (1976:218), who referred to this figure variously as "Lady Beast-with-the-Upturned-Snout," "Lady Methuselah," or simply as the "mythological ancestress." In later writings, as we have seen, Schele opted for the amusing label "Lady Beastie." I use here the more neutral and functional term "Triad Progenitor," for as comments to come will clarify there is strong evidence suggesting that this deity is not a female character, but rather an aspect of the maize god. Some time has passed since the last significant discussion of this all-important character, and a review of its identity and role in Palenque's mythology seems necessary.

As we see in Figure 145, the form of the name varies in some details, yet its second part regularly shows the "bird-with-the-upturned-snout" beneath a regular superfix. In six of the nine examples of the name, the bird collocation follows a human profile that, in turn, comes after a grouping that includes the superfix depicting young maize, read **NAL**. It is difficult to know why this first portion of the name, before the bird, was optional, but there is no question that these all refer to the same individual.

The initial portion of the full name has as its main element (beneath the **NAL**) a rare sign known from only a few other contexts in Maya inscriptions. It can be graphically abbreviated simply by showing its upper three-part section in combination with other signs, usually a head sign that follows it. Schele and Grube (1990) entertain a reading of **HEM** (cf. Yuk. *hem*, "valley") for this sign, presumably based on the similarity of the abbreviated form to the attested syllable **je**, but they are in fact quite different signs. The value of this logogram remains unknown, but the appearance of the suffix -**na** in several examples suggests its eventual value will be CV**N**. We can be reasonably confident, however, that the word corresponding to this logogram must stand for some type of location or environment, for in the Dresden Codex we find it given as one of the many possible places for the storm god Chaak. The locational function of the sign is known also from its appearance in a mythical toponym cited at Palenque and Copan, written **5-NICH-TE'-?,** or "Five Flower ..?..," as well as some images in the Dresden Codex (for example, page 69b).[59]

[59] I have very tentatively entertained a value of **AK** or **AKAN**, "grass, grassland, bajo," for this sign, with admittedly scanty evidence. The initial vowel seems to be indicated by a possessed form (**ya-AK?-na**) found on an Early Classic shell trumpet in the Perlman collection (Coe 1982). More compelling, perhaps, is the visual form of this logograph with its row of vertical stripes, suggesting a spread of grass as seen from the side. The Dresden representations of Chaak standing knee-high in an identical material also are suggestive of "grassiness." The **-NAL** may be combined with this to produce **AK-na-NAL**, for *ak(a)n-al*, "grassy" (the spelling would then be structurally similar to **CHAN-na-NAL**, *chan-al*, "heavenly, of the sky").

The human head that follows has long been cited as evidence that this is a female deity, likening it to the **IX-** prefix ubiquitous on female names—hence the labels "Lady Methuselah" or "Lady Beastie." But this gender identification is now less obvious than it first seemed. One problem comes from the final position of the sign within the first portion of the name, whereas all female names show **IX** as an initial element. Moreover, there is perhaps an important visual distinction between the profile of the Palenque name and the female head **IX** or **IXIK**: while similar in many respects, it bears a distinctive forehead tassel that has more resemblance to the Classic form of the young tonsured maize god identified by Taube (1985). The comparison of the two signs can perhaps be best seen in the text on the sarcophagus of K'inich Janab Pakal (Figure 146), where the profiles of the maize deity and the feminine heads appear to be very different, with the **IX-** signs displaying hair strands in place of the tassels seen on the corn deity. In a stucco text from House D at Palenque (Figure 147) we see an important version of the Progenitor's name, where the head is without question Taube's "tonsured" maize god with the forehead tassel. The visual clues are clear enough to suggest that previous identifications of the Progenitor as a "mother goddess" are incorrect, and that the name in fact incorporates the word or name for the Classic Maya maize deity.[60]

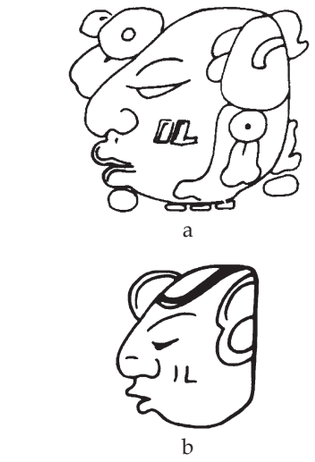


Figure 146. Comparison of the female head sign (**IXIK**) with the tonsured maize god sign, on the Sarcophagus of Pakal (drawings by Merle Greene Robertson).

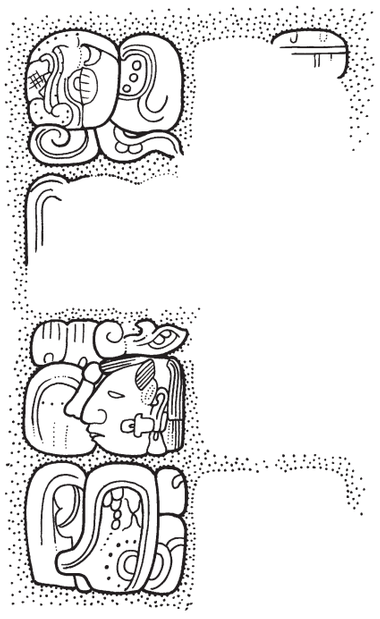


Figure 147. Stucco inscription from Palenque, House D, Pier E.

[60] The stucco text from Pier 6 of House D carries only three glyphs, from an original inscription consisting of eighteen (see Robertson 1985:Fig. 239). The initial portion of the Triad Progenitor's name is at A3, and I assume that B3 was the second component, with the bird main sign. The initial glyph of the inscription seems to be a "birth" glyph that combines with **K'AHK'** and is therefore reminiscent of the name of an important character in early Tikal history, Siyaj K'ahk' (also known as "Smoking Frog") (S. Martin, personal communication 1998; see D. Stuart 2000a). The text on Pier 6 was presumably designed to accompany the sculpted piers of House D on the west face of the Palace and perhaps served as an orienting text for the mythical narrative depicted in those figural scenes. Interestingly, the young maize god is depicted on nearly all of the piers, often holding a hafted axe. It seems conceivable that these are portraits of the Triad Progenitor, shown taking part in segments of Palenque's mythical history that thus far lack any textual explanation. The common image of the wielded axe, and a decapitation scene on Pier F, does seem thematically related to the "axe event" we read of in Episode S-2 of the platform text.

As for the value of this maize deity head, **NAL** has been proposed in a few studies (Schele, Mathews, and Lounsbury 1990b; Houston, Stuart, and Taube 1992), but this is now highly doubtful in my view. Perhaps the best counter-evidence is that we already have a **NAL** "young maize" sign, T87, for which the head never substitutes. Rather, I suggest that we consider the reading **IXIM**, "maize," for this head, based on a few lines of evidence from other texts. The maize god is clearly a part of selected Primary Standard Sequence (PSS) texts on pottery, where it appears as part of the modifying terms before *kakaw*, "cacao drink." There, it is known to take the prefix **i-**, seemingly as a phonetic complement to **IXIM**. In the PSS, the head sign may therefore be used to spell a certain type of cacao drink called **IXIM-TE'-le ka-ka-wa**, or *iximte'-el kakaw*. *Iximte'* or *iximche'* is a widespread floral name in Mayan languages, usually used to refer to a fruit-bearing medicinal plant known as *Casearia nitida* (see Roys 1931:249).

The remaining portion of the deity's name is its ever-present "core," consisting of an unusual bird with a superfix. The upper element remains elusive to decipherment and little can be said about it, except to mention that it is a very rare sign overall. The birds are, however, far more interesting. We recognize very clearly here the cormorant (**MAT**) of the Palenque Emblem Glyph, but with the important difference of having feathers stuck in its mouth. On the Temple XIX platform, the names of the Triad Progenitor exhibit a bit more telling detail, showing a bird's foot among the feathers in the mouth. The image seems to be one of a bird eating another smaller bird, the feet and tail feathers of which are visible within the beak. Although a strange image, perhaps, it is nonetheless familiar from the glyph for the month Muwan, where the tail and one rear leg of a bird are clearly visible within the open beak of the larger bird, probably that of a screech owl or hawk. Given the visual connection to **MUWAAN**, I believe we can confidently posit that the bird of this name is a conflation of the **MAT** cormorant and the **MUWAAN** bird. Most importantly, the Temple XIX text displays a never-before-seen sign on the Triad Progenitor's name: the suffix **-ni**. This provides a key piece of evidence in support of the conflation, for we routinely find the form **MUWAAN-ni** in the spelling of the fifteenth month. If confirmation were needed, we can turn to the two pairs of stucco glyphs from the roof of Palenque's Palace recorded by Maudslay (Figure 145g). This seems to be a variant of the same deity's name, showing the separate spellings of **MUWAAN** and **ma-ta**, the latter of course being a syllabic replacement of the cormorant **MAT** logogram. Here, then, we have the correct reading order of the two bird names: *Muwaan Mat*. We are therefore not too far from a more complete understanding of the Triad Progenitor's name. Of the constituent signs, two lack secure readings as yet. If we analyze the complete name, we have the sequence **?-na-NAL-IXIM? ?-MUWAAN-MAT**.

The Triad Progenitor is named in the Cross Tablets and on the Temple XIX platform as a creator being, as we know from the use of the important term *ch'ab* to express his or her relationship to the Triad deities. **CH'AB** is now the established reading of the "lancet" element found in some bloodletting expressions and in parentage statements (Schele, Mathews, and Lounsbury 1977). The word is often glossed as "penance" in Mayan languages, and in Yucatec as "to create something out of nothing." In parentage statements such as the one in Passage S-5, the phrase *u-baah u-ch'ab* would seem to indicate that the offspring is the *ch'ab* of the parent. In the *Ritual of the Bacabs*, this term is closely linked to the language of birth and creation (Schele 1993), and given its range of meanings I prefer to translate the term simply as "creation," with the understanding that it is a type of creation specifically concerned with sacrifice in some way, as well as concepts surrounding rites of "penance," at least as so

described in the colonial and modern dictionaries.

The Triad Progenitor appears to be a male creator deity strongly associated with the Classic maize god, although we should understand that gender was a pliable concept among some Mesoamerican supernatural beings. The beaded skirt worn by the maize god is of course also a key element in portraits of women in Classic Maya art (Taube 1998; Quenon and Lefort 1998), as well as male rulers who impersonate the maize deity, as shown on Stela H at Copan. The rites of bloodletting and sacrifice, and their conceptual overlaps with supernatural birth, have long been identified as a running theme in such representations (D. Stuart 1984, 1988), and although some of the evidence remains indirect, I believe the mythical narrative at Palenque suggests that the appearance of the Palenque Triad gods was not a literal "birth," but perhaps rather a creative act performed by the ritual bloodletting of the Progenitor god himself. In the case of GI, this act was a rebirth, a re-creation of an established cosmological deity into a new form and within the three-part structure seemingly necessary for community patrons in the Classic lowlands.

Having the Emblem Glyph title (*K'uhul Matwil Ajaw*), the Triad Progenitor takes on the appearance of a high king, and as the Temple XIX inscriptions seem to indicate, this ancestral god was considered a mythological founder—the "first" dynast, as explicitly stated in Passage S-6. Yet this deity was probably not the initial member in a mythological or semi-historical line of Palenque kings, given the vast period of time between the Triad Progenitor and the stated inauguration of Uk'ix Chan, the first vaguely historical figure of the dynasty, who is recorded in the Tablet of the Cross. Although many historical Palenque rulers are called "Holy Lords of Matwil," the Triad Progenitor seems to have had an intimate association with this watery place of origin and divine birth.

The emphasis on the "first" accession suggests that the Triad Progenitor's ritual act of birth established a ritual charter that was to be followed by later Palenque rulers, who acted as "caretakers" of the Triad. The individual gods of the Triad are repeatedly called the *huntan*, roughly "precious being," of K'inich Kan Bahlam in the texts of the Cross Group temples, using the same term otherwise reserved for the children of mothers. He and other Palenque rulers thus continued to fulfill the role established by this primordial god, a role that no doubt involved concepts of reciprocity and the continuance of a social and political order.

Palenque and the Day "Nine Wind"

Throughout the inscriptions of Temple XIX we have come across a number of mythical and historical dates intentionally related through their common use of the day 9 Ik' in the 260-day calendar. To review the pattern from Temple XIX alone, we have:

9 Ik' 5 Mol	seating as ruler of GI
9 Ik' 15 Keh	birth of GI
9 Ik' Seating of Sak	accession of the Triad Progenitor
9 Ik' 5 K'ayab	accession of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb

These four events were related to one another in order to produce a series of "like-in-kind" analogies. The parallels are made explicit on Temple XIX's platform as well as on other Palenque monuments, particularly with regard to K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb and his evident desire to link his accession with that of the Triad Progenitor.

We find the 9 Ik' date associated with two other important events in Palenque's mythology



Figure 148. The Temple XIV Tablet (drawing by Merle Greene Roberston).

and history. On the tablet of Temple XIV (Figure 148) the main text opens with the calendar round 9 Ik' 10 Mol, which corresponds to a date in the vast "deep time" of Maya cosmology. A Distance Number of some 946,000 years[61] reckons forward from an event on this 9 Ik' date to a historical date 9.13.13.15.0 9 Ajaw 3 K'ank'in (see Schele 1988:308). The nature of this intriguing event—far earlier in time than the seating of GI—is simply described as the "first K'awil-taking," and it obviously stands as a primordial episode of divine origin.

Another 9 Ik' comes from the tablet of Temple XVII (Figure 149), with its rare scene (for Palenque) of a warrior and a captive. Here the opening date is again retrospective though still historical, falling in the Early Classic on 9.2.15.9.2 9 Ik' End of Yaxk'in. The episode appears to be the establishment of Lakamha', the ritual center of Palenque as constructed around the Río Otolum.[62] The associated protagonist is the Palenque ruler Butz'aj Sak Chiik

[61] Schele (1988:305) noted that Lounsbury reconstructed the somewhat damaged Distance Number as 5.18.4.7.8.13.18, which I follow here.

[62] I say "establishment" because the verb glyph on the Temple XVII tablet, though undeciphered, seems to carry this general sense in other settings. For example, on the Palace Tablet it serves as the verb within the 819-day count record, replacing the more customary *wa'*, "stand-up," event. For now "establish" seems a reasonable reading.



Figure 149. The Temple XVII Tablet (rubbing by Merle Greene Roberston).

(called "Manik" in the earlier literature), and after his name we find a reference to Ahkal Mo' Nahb, the Early Classic ruler who would soon assume the throne. Later in the same text (on fragments discovered redeposited in antiquity in Temple XXI) there is mention of a date 260 days later, on 9.2.16.4.2 9 Ik' 15 Wo, although the verb is missing (the accession of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb would come exactly 11.14.0.0 later). On the Temple XVII tablet we once more see how 9 Ik' occupies a key role as an elemental date of history and of origin, although now in a real historical context. Evidently the local history of the site, indeed its very founding, was geared or manipulated to reflect important temporal symmetries and patterns. In a very real way ancient Palenque was a city whose religious and political identity hinged on "Nine Wind" and the symbolism it conveyed.

Chapter 7.

The Weight of Time



Temple XIX and its recently investigated companion Temple XXI were arguably the most ambitious architectural and artistic endeavors during the reign of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. With new designs and complex narratives, they expressed a collective set of ideas that reaffirmed the intimate connections and shared identities between gods and rulers. And like the other temples of the Cross Group, the two temples presented Palenque's own understanding of creation at a place called Matwil and the central role played in that story by the Triad gods, in particular GI. As the inscriptions of these temples all make clear, kings such as K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb were considered embodiments of those primordial deities and ancestors, who, through their own rituals and sacrifices, continued a process of ritual renewal begun nearly four millennia previously. We can easily focus on the esoterica of such records and iconography, but we should also keep in mind the political and social setting of these expressions, and the motivations that lay beneath them during a troubled time in Palenque's history.

Succeeding his unfortunate uncle, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb assumed power through somewhat unconventional means and represented a new generation of ruler in a court that had not seen too much change in office over the previous century. He was by no means a young man on his accession, but he followed in the footsteps of his two uncles, who had reigned collectively for nearly thirty-eight years. His grandfather K'inich Janab Pakal had in turn reigned for a stunning sixty-eight years, and his legacy must have weighed particularly heavily on K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb. The grandson derived his political legitimacy largely through direct lineal descent from Pakal, which also largely explains the prominence of his father Tiwol Chan Mat in Temple XVIII and in other historical records of the time. So important was Pakal, in fact, that the great ancestor was the central protagonist of the panel decorating the Temple XXI platform, where he is shown flanked by K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb and Upakal K'inich. The panel is full of embedded symbolism, since Pakal himself is depicted as the impersonator of still earlier ancestors of Palenque's rich and complex history.

Upakal K'inich, the successor of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, remains a curious figure in all of this. Temple XIX and XXI were dedicated at a time when this possible brother of the king was also a powerful figure near the throne. He himself was evidently not a king until well after the dedication of the buildings (his contemporaneous records, if they exist, remain

Detail of Upakal K'inich from the stucco panel of the Temple XIX pier.

undiscovered), yet he carries a strange and almost self-contradictory title, *ch'ok K'uhul Baakal Ajaw*, perhaps best understood as "the emergent Holy Baakal Lord." There can be little doubt that he was soon to be king, but his precise connection to K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb stands as something of a mystery. They seem to be near contemporaries in age (we do lack Upakal K'inich's birth date, however), and on Temple XXI's tablet they seem to assume a more-or-less equivalent role on either side of K'inich Janab Pakal. As we have seen, Upakal K'inich is probably best seen as the younger brother of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, and together they offer an obvious parallel to the brother-to-brother successions that took place with their uncles. Temples XIX and XXI can be seen as an important refurbishment of the Cross Group by a generation that was probably very conscious of its immediate predecessors and wished to redefine the relevance of the Triad gods for their own time and political advantage.

K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb relied on GI in particular to express and legitimate the religious foundation of his rule, and this seems to be the larger point of the Temple XIX platform. No other known Maya king integrated himself so strongly and explicitly into a mythological narrative, making his own inauguration into a re-creation of primordial mythic history. Here and in other inscriptions throughout Palenque, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb also made direct connections between his assumption of power and the so-called "first accession" of the Triad Progenitor. As far as we know, neither K'inich Janab Pakal nor his two sons ever proposed such strong links to the past in their own presentation of history. (The Tablet of the Cross may come close, but there we find K'inich Kan Bahlam simply associating himself, mainly through his ancestor Kan Bahlam, with the long succession of Early Classic kings.) There is no one god associated with these lords as a "like-in-kind" figure. In this light, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb seems to have embraced a radical (at least for Palenque) notion of the divinity underlying royal power.

Why such a drastic change? Was it a reaction to practical difficulties of political and social life in eighth-century Palenque? I suspect this was so. K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb was perhaps using such symbols and claims of legitimation to revive, if not redefine in a basic way, the difficult and strained notions of divine power that had long existed within Palenque's dynasty. He not only harkened back to Pakal, himself an ancestral impersonator in Temple XXI, but chose to equate himself with the gods who a long time before created a proper order out of primordial chaos. Looking over the writing and imagery of Temples XIX and XXI, we come away sensing that eons of time weighed heavily on this king.

Detail of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb from the stone panel of the Temple XIX pier.

Appendix A.

Transcription of the Temple XIX Inscriptions



I. The *Alfarda* Tablet

(missing section)
…
pA1: **yo-OK-?-TAL**
pB1: **ya-AJAW-K'AHK'**
pA2: **16-7-WINIK-ji-ya**
pB2: **2-HAAB-ya I-u-ti**
pC1: **9-"KIB" 19-K'AN-a-si-ya**
pD1: **OCH-OTOT-NAAH**
pC2: **CHAK-?-NAAH-hi**
pD2: **U-?-pi?-ji-li**
pE1: **[…]**
pF1: **[…]**
pE2: **7-AJAW 3 WAY?-HAAB**
pF2: **[…]**

II. The Stone Panel

A1: **?**
B1: **9-PIK**
A2: **15-WINIKHAAB?**
B2: **2-HAAB**
A3: **7-WINIK**

[missing section, 28 blocks]

H1: **4-10-WINIK-ji-ya**
G2: […]

H2: **6-MUWAAN-K'A'-yi**
I1: **U-?-SAK-IK'-li**
J1: **TIWOL?-la**…
I2: **ch'o-ko-AJ-?-WINIK?-?**
J2: **12-…**

[missing section, 17 blocks]

N7: **18-13-WINIK-ji-ya**

[missing section, 10 blocks]

O6: **[k'a]-ma-?**
P6: **U-CHOK?-ji**
O7: **K'INICH-AHK-la-MO'-NAHB**
P7: **K'UHUL-BAAK-la-AJAW**

III. The Stucco Panel

A1: **3-AJAW-3-YAX-K'IN-ni**
B1: **?**
A2: **U-NAAH-hi U-?-le**
B2: **6-AJAW 13-MUWAAN-ni**
C1: **CHUM-TUUN-ni**
D1: **U-2-TAL-la U-?-le**
C2: **9-AJAW 18-ka-se-wa**
D2: **k'a-[ma]-? hi-li**
D3: **U-?-le U-PAKAL-K'INICH**
D4: **ba-ch'o-ko ?-NAL-la**
D5: **ch'o-ko-UNEN-K'AWIL-la**
D6: **?-?-K'UH**

IV. The Platform

Main Text, South Side

A1: **?**
B1: **12-CHAN-?**
A2: **10-WINIKHAAB?-ya**
B2: **1-HAAB-ya**
A3: **13-WINIK-ki**
B3: **2-K'IN-ni**
A4: **9-IK'**
B4: **9-K'AM-ma-ja-K'UH**
A5: **U-TI'-HUUN-na**

B5: **2-K′AL?-ji-ya-HUL**
A6: **U-2-?-?**
B6: **?-?-AHIN-ni**
A7: **U-ch′o-ko-K′ABA′**
B7: **?-ki-9**
A8: **U-TZ′AK-AJ**
B8: **17-16-WINIK-ji-ya**
C1: **1-HAAB-ya**
D1: **1-"CHIKCHAN"**
C2: **17-IK′-SIHOOM-ma**
D2: **WA′?-ji-ya**
C3: **K′AWIL-la-?**
D3: **EL-K′IN-ni**
C4: **I-u-ti**
D4: **5-TE′-mo-lo**
C5: **CHUM-la-ja**
D5: **TA-AJAW-le**
C6: **1-?-?-?**
D6: **U-KAB-ji-ya**
C7: **YAX-NAAH-hi**
D7: **ITZAMNAAJ-ji**
C8: **u-ti-ya**
D8: **TA-WUT?-CHAN**

E1: **16-1-WINIK-ya**
F1: **11-HAAB-ya**
E2: **1-"ETZ′NAB"**
F2: **6-YAX-K′IN-ni**
E3: **CH′AK-ka-U-BAAH**
F3: **?-?-?**
E4: **tz′i-ba-la-?-?**
F4: **3-?-wa-ja**
E5: **U-CH′ICH′?-le**
F5: **na-ka-?-wa-AJ**
E6: **jo-ch′o-K′AHK′-AJ**
F6: **I-PAT-la-ja**
G1: **ye-TE′-je**
H1: **1-?-?-?**

G2: **0-8-WINIK-ji-ya**
H2: **3-HAAB-ya**
G3: **8-WINIKHAAB?-ya**
H3: **2-PIK-ya**
G4: **u-ti-ya**
H4: **9-IK′**
G5: **5-TE′-mo-lo**

H5: **I-u-ti**
G6: **9-IK′**
H6: **15-CHAK-SIHOOM-ma**
I1: **[SIH?]-ya-ja**
J1: **[1-?-?]-?**
I2: **U-TAL?-ka-ba**
J2: **ma-MAT-wi-la**

I3: **13-"KIMI"**
J3: **19-CHAK-SIHOOM**
I4: **SIH?-ya-ja**
J4: **K′INICH-?-?-wa**

I5: **U-14-la-ta**
J5: **1-AJAW 13-MAK-ka**
I6: **SIH?-ja-ji-ya**
J6: **UNEN-K′AWIL-la**
K1: **U-TAL?-ka-ba**
L1: **ma-MAT-wi-la**
K2: **U-BAAH-hi**
L2: **U-CH′AB**
K3: **?-NAL-IXIM?**
L3: **?-(MUWAAN-ni-MAT)**

K4: **2-6-WINIK-ji-ya**
L4: **15-HAAB-ya**
K5: **1-WINIKHAAB?-ya**
L5: **9-IK′**
K6: **CHUM-SAK-SIHOOM-ma**
L6: **U-NAAH-TAL-la**
M1: **AJAW-?-ya-ni**
N1: **?-NAL-IXIM?**
M2: **?-(MUWAAN-ni-MAT)**
N2: **K′UHUL-MAT-la-AJAW**

M3: **mi-12-WINIK-ji-ya**
N3: **9-HAAB-ya**
M4: **14-WINIKHAAB?-ya**
N4: **7-PIK-ya**
M5: **I-u-ti**
N5: **9-IK′**
M6: **5-K′AN-a-si-ya**
N6: **AJAW-?-ya-ni**
M7: **o-ki-bi**
N7: **K′INICH-AHK-la-MO′-NAHB**
M8: **K′UHUL-BAAK-la-AJAW**

N8: **18-13-WINIK-ji-ya**
O1: **2-HAAB-ya**
P1: **6-AJAW**
O2: **8-CHAK-SIHOOM-ma**
P2: **13-TUUN-ni**
O3: **U-NAAH-K′AL-TUUN-ni**
P3: **U-K′AM-wa-OOB?**
O4: **ya-AHIN?**
P4: **?**
O5: **yi-chi-NAL-la**
P5: **1-?-?-?**
O6: **UNEN-K′AWIL-la**
P6: **K′INICH-?-?-wa**
O7: **u-ti-ya**
P7: **TAHN-na**
O8: **CH′EEN-na**
P8: **LAKAM-HA′**

Main Text, West Side

A1: **7-AJAW**
B1: **8-K′AN-a-si-ya**
A2: **7-ku-lu-TUUN-ni**
B2: **PAT-wa-ni**
A3: **yo-ko-bi-li**
B3: **YAX-ITZAM?-AT**
A4: **TUUN-ni-AJAW**
B4: **U-CHOK?-CH′AJ-ji**
A5: **K′AN-na-JOY-CHITAM-ma**
B5: **K′UHUL-BAAK-la-AJAW**

A6: **0-0-WINIK-ji-ya**
B6: **13-HAAB-ya**
A7: **8-WINIKHAAB?-ya**
B7: **4-AJAW**
A8: **13-YAX-SIHOOM-ma**
B8: **CHUM-TUUN-ni**
C1: **U-15-WINIKHAAB?**
D1: **U-K′AL-TUUN-ni**
C2: **K′INICH-AHK-la-MO′-NAHB**
D2: **K′UHUL-MAT-la-AJAW**
C3: **U-NAAH-U-HACH?-tu**
D3: **TA-?**
C4: **sa-ja-la-9**

D4: **U-TZ′AK-AJ**
C5: **16-7-WINIK-ji-ya**
D5: **2-HAAB-ya**
C6: **I-u-ti**
D6: **9-"KIB"**
C7: **19-K′AN-a-si-ya**
D7: **OCH-chi-K′AHK′**
C8: **TA-8-NAAH-K′INICH-EL?**
D8: **K′AHK′-ku-?-ku-NAAH**
E1: **U-CHAK-?-NAAH-li**
F1a: **"G1"**

F1b: **4-K′AL?-ji-ya**
E2: **7-AJAW**
F2: **3-WAY?-HAAB-ma? / k′a-ma-?**
E3: **U-?-?-mu-li**
F3: **U-HACH?-chi-tu**
E4: **sa-la-ja-9**

F4: **17-6-WINIK-ji-ya**
E5: **2-HAAB-ya**
F5: **6-"KABAN"**
E6: **5-YAX-K′IN-ni**
F6: **OCH-K′AHK′**
E7: **3-^{2}jo-lo**
F7: **BAAK-?-KAB**
E8: **U-CHAK-?-NAAH-li**
F8: **UNEN-K′AWIL-la**
G1: **K′INICH-O′?-NAAH**
H1: **U-CHAK-?-NAAH-li**
G2: **K′INICH-?-?-wa**

H2: **3-2-WINIK-ji-ya**
G3: **10-AJAW**
H3: **8-CHAK-SIHOOM-ma**
G4: **NAAH-5-TUUN-ni**
H4: **?-hi?-li?**
G5: **yo-ko-bi-li**
H5: **AJ-…**
G6: **yi-chi-NAL-la**
H6: **AJ-CHIT?-…**
G7: **1-?-?-?**
H7: **U-CHOK?-ji**
G8: **K′INICH-AHK-MO′-NAHB**
H8: **K′UHUL-BAAK-la-AJAW**

Appendix B.

Transliteration and Prose Translation Of the Temple XIX Platform



South Side

I. Passage S-1

..?..
Lajchan Chan ..?..
Lajun-winikhaab-iiy
Jun-haab-iiy
Uxlajun-winik
Cha'-k'in
Bolon Ik'
Bolon K'ahm-aj K'uh u-ti'-hu'n
Cha'-k'al-ij-iiy hul-iiy u-cha'-..?..
..?..-..?..-Ahin u-ch'ok-k'aba' k'al(?)-ik-bolon
U-tz'ak-aj wuklajun-[..?..]-waklajun-winik-ij-iiy jun-haab-iiy
Jun Chan(?) Waxaklajun-te' Ik'sihoom
Wa'(?)-(a)j-iiy K'awil-..?.. el-k'in
I-ut ho'-te'-Mol
Chum-l-aj ta-ajaw-le(l) Jun-..?..- ..?..
U-kab-j-iiy Yax Naah Itzamnaaj
Ut-iiy ta-wut(?)-chan

Twelve "Bak'tuns"
Ten-score years, then
One year, then
Thirteen-score
(and) two days.
It is Nine Ik'.
Nine-Gods-Are-Taken is (at) the margin(?).
Twenty-two days ago the second [lunation] arrived here.

The ? Crocodile is the emergent name of what will be twenty-nine days.
It is the sequence of seventeen plus sixteen-score days, and one year.
It was One Chikchan, the Eighteenth of Ch'en,
K'awil ? was erected in the East.
And then the Fifth of Mol happens.
"GI" is seated into the rulership,
Yax Naah Itzamnaaj tends to it.
It took place on the face of heaven.

II. Passage S-2

Waklajun-[..?..]-jun-winik-ij-iiy buluch-haab-iiy
Jun ..?.. Wak-te' Yaxk'in
Ch'ahk(-aj) u-baah ..?.. tz'ibal-..?..
Ux-..?..w-aj u-..?..-el
Nak-..?..w-aj joch-k'ahk'-aj
I-pat-l-aj y-ete'-ej Jun-..?..-..?..

Sixteen plus one-score days and eleven years, then
It is One Etz'nab the sixth of Yaxk'in,
Chopped is the head of the 'Hole'-backed Starry-Deer Crocodile (and) the Inscribed-back Starry Deer Crocodile.
Thrice flows(?) the blood of the ? person, the Fire-drill person.
Then it is fashioned, he ? it, "GI."

III. Passage S-3

Mih-[..?..]-waxak-winik-ij-iiy ux-haab-iiy waxak-winikhaab-iiy cha'-pik-iiy
Ut-iiy Bolon Ik' Ho'-te'-Mol
I-ut Bolon Ik' Ho'lajun Chaksihoom
Siy-aj Jun-..?..-..?..
U-tal(?)-kab Matwil

No days, eight Winals, three years, eight-score years, and two "Bak'tuns"
(after) Nine Ik' the fifth of Mol came to pass,
Then it came to pass (the day) Nine Ik' the Fifteenth of Chaksihoom
When GI was born.
He touched the earth at Matwil.

IV. Passage S-4

Uxlajun Chamiy(?) Bolonlajun Chaksihoom
Siy-aj K'inich-..?..-..?..

On Thirteen Chamiy the Nineteenth of Chaksihoom, GIII was born.

V. Passage S-5

U-chanlajun-lat Jun Ajaw Uxlajun-te' Mak
Siy-aj-iiy Unen-K'awil
U-tal(?)-kab Matwil
U-baah u-ch'ab Akan(?)-nal Ixim ..?..-Muwaan-Mat

Fourteen days later, on One Ajaw the Thirteenth of Mak, GII was born.
They touched the earth at Matwil.
Their persons are the creation of Akan?-nal Ixim ? Muwaan Mat.

VI. Passage S-6

Cha'-[..?..]-wak-winik-ij-iiy ho'lajun-haab-iiy jun-..?..-iiy
Bolon Ik' Chum Saksihoom
U-naah-tal ajaw-yan Akan(?)-nal Ixim ..?..-Muwaan-Mat K'uhul-Matwil-Ajaw

Two days, six winals, fifteen years and one-score years later
It is Nine Ik', the Seating of Saksihoom.
It is the first becoming a lord of Akan?-nal Ixim ? Muwaan Mat, the Holy Lord of Matwil.

VII. Passage S-7

Mih-[..?..]-lajchan-winik-ij-iiy bolon-haab-iiy chanlajun-winikbaab?-iiy wuk-pik-iiy
I-ut Bolon Ik' Jo-te' K'anasiiy
Ajaw-yan Okib K'inich-Ahkal-Mo'-Nahb K'uhul-Baakal-Ajaw

No days, twelve winals, nine years, fourteen-score years and seven "Bak'tuns" later
Then Nine Ik', the Fifth of K'anasiiy comes to pass.
Okib K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb becomes a lord.

VIII. Passage S-8

Waxaklajun-[..?..]-uxlajun-winik-ij-iiy cha'-haab-iiy
Wak Ajaw Waxak-te' Chaksihoom
Uxlajun Tuun
U-naah-k'al-tuun
U-k'am-aw-oob(?) y-ahin(?) ..?..
Y-ich-(V)n-al Jun-..?..-..?.. Unen-K'awil K'inich-..?..-..?..
Ut-iiy tan ch'een Lakamha'

Eighteen days, thirteen winals, and two years later
It is Six Ajaw, the Eighth of Chaksihoom.
It is thirteen stones.

It is the first stone-binding.
He takes the crocodile throne (?)
In the presence of GI, GII, and GIII.
It happened in front of the spring of Lakamha'.

West Side

I. Passage W-1

Wuk Ajaw waxak-te' K'anasiiy
Wuk-kul Tuun
Pat-w-an y-ok-(i)b-il Yax-Itzam-Aat Tuun-Ajaw
U-chok-ch'aj-ij K'an-Joy-Chitam K'uhul-Baakal-Ajaw

Seven Ajaw, the Eighth of K'anasiiy,
It is seven grouped stones.
The pedestal(?) of Yax Itzam Aat, the Tuun Lord, gets fashioned.
K'an Joy Chitam, the Holy Lord of Baakal, casts (incense upon it?).

II. Passage W-2

Mih-[..?..]-mih-winik-ij-iiy uxlajun-haab-iiy, waxak-winikhaab?-iiy
Chan Ajaw Uxlajun Yaxsihoom
Chum-tuun u-ho'lajun-winikhaab?
U-k'al-tuun K'inich-Ahkal-Mo'-Nahb K'uhul-Matwil-Ajaw
U-naah u-hach(?)-t-u(?) ta-..?.. Salaj-Bolon

No days, no winals, thirteen years, and eight-score years later
It is Four Ajaw, the Thirteenth of Yaxsihoom,
It is the stone-seating,
It is the fifteenth-score year.
It is the stone-binding of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, the Holy Lord of Baakal.
It is the first raising(?) of GI, the Salaj Bolon.

III. Passage W-3

U-tz'ak-aj waklajun-[..?..]-wuk-winik-ij-iiy cha'-haab-iiy
I-ut Bolon-"Kib" Bolonlajun-te' K'anasiiy
Och-k'ahk' ta Waxak-K'inich-El(?)-Naah
K'ahk'-..?..-Naah u-chak-..?..-naah-il "GI"

It is the sequence of sixteen days, seven winals and two years
Then Nine Kib the Nineteenth of K'anasiiy happens.
The fire enters into the Eight Great Sun Emergence House(s)(?).
The Fire ? House is the red ? house of "GI."

IV. Passage W-4

Chan-[..?..]-k'al-ij-iiy
Wuk-Ajaw Ux-te'-Wayhaab(?)
K'am- ..?..
U-..?..-il
U-hach(?)-t-u(?) Salaj-Bolon

Twenty-four days later
It is Seven Ajaw, the Third of Wayeb,
It is the rope-taking(?).
It is his ?
It is the carrying(?) of Salaj Bolon.

V. Passage W-5

Wuklajun-[..?..]-wak-winik-ij-iiy cha'-haab-iiy
Wak "Kaban" Jo-te' Yaxk'in
Och k'ahk' Ux Jojol? Baak ..?.. Kab u-chak-..?..-naah-il Unen-K'awil
K'inich O'? Naah u-chak-..?..-naah-il K'inich-..?..-..?..

Seventeen days, six winals and two years later
It is Six Kaban the Fifth of Yaxk'in.
The fire enters (into) The Three-Skull(?) Bone ?, the red ? house of GII.
The Great Sun ? House is the red ? house of GIII.

VI. Passage W-6

Ux-[..?..]-cha'-winik-ij-iiy
Lajun Ajaw Waxak-te' Ik'sihoom
Naahho'tuun
..?.. hil(?) y-ok-b-il Aj ...
Y-ich-n-al Aj Chit ... "GI"
U-chok-ij K'inich-Ahkal-Mo'-Nahb K'uhul-Baakal-Ajaw

Three days and two winals later
It is Ten Ajaw the Eighth of Ik'sihom.
It is the First Five Stones.
The *okib* of Aj ? (event missing).
It is in the presence of Aj Chit ... "GI."
K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb, the Holy Lord of Baakal, casts (incense upon it?).



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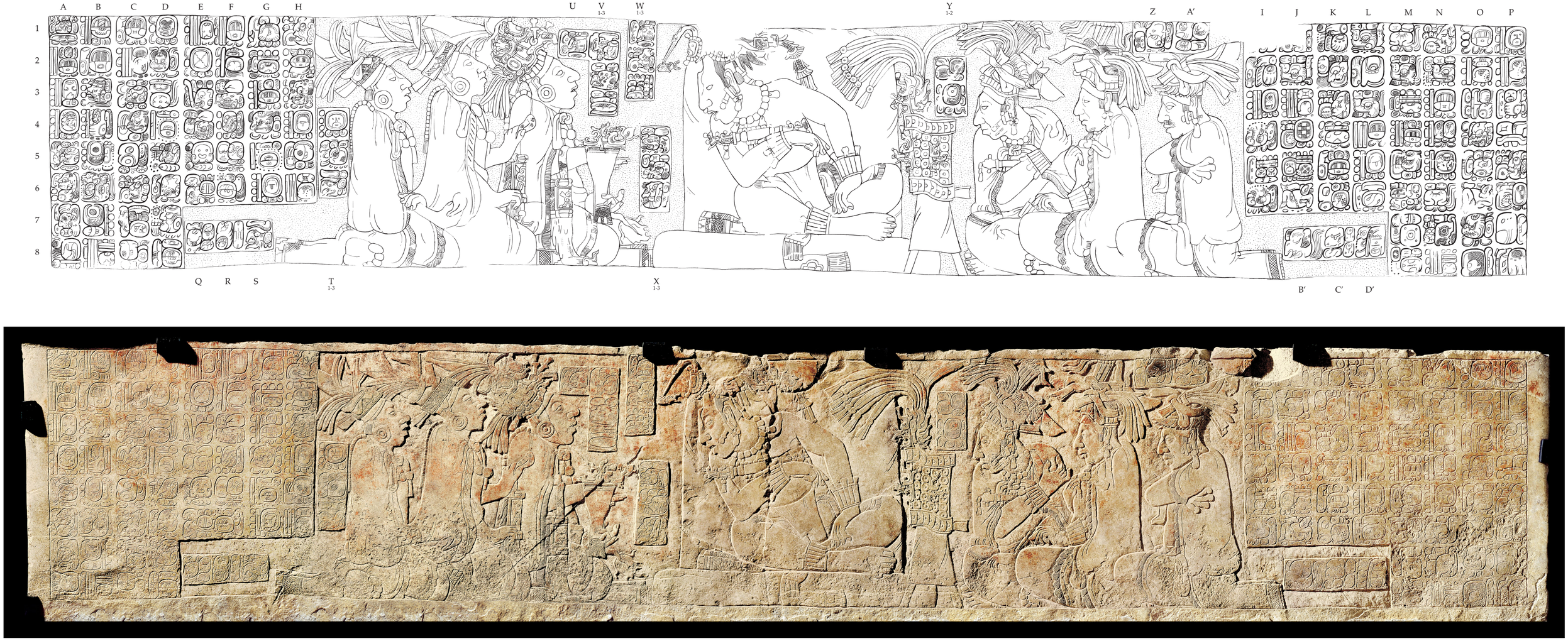
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West face of the platform from Temple XIX, Palenque

Drawing by David Stuart. Photograph by Jorge Pérez de Lara



South face of the platform from Temple XIX, Palenque

Drawing by David Stuart. Photograph by Jorge Pérez de Lara